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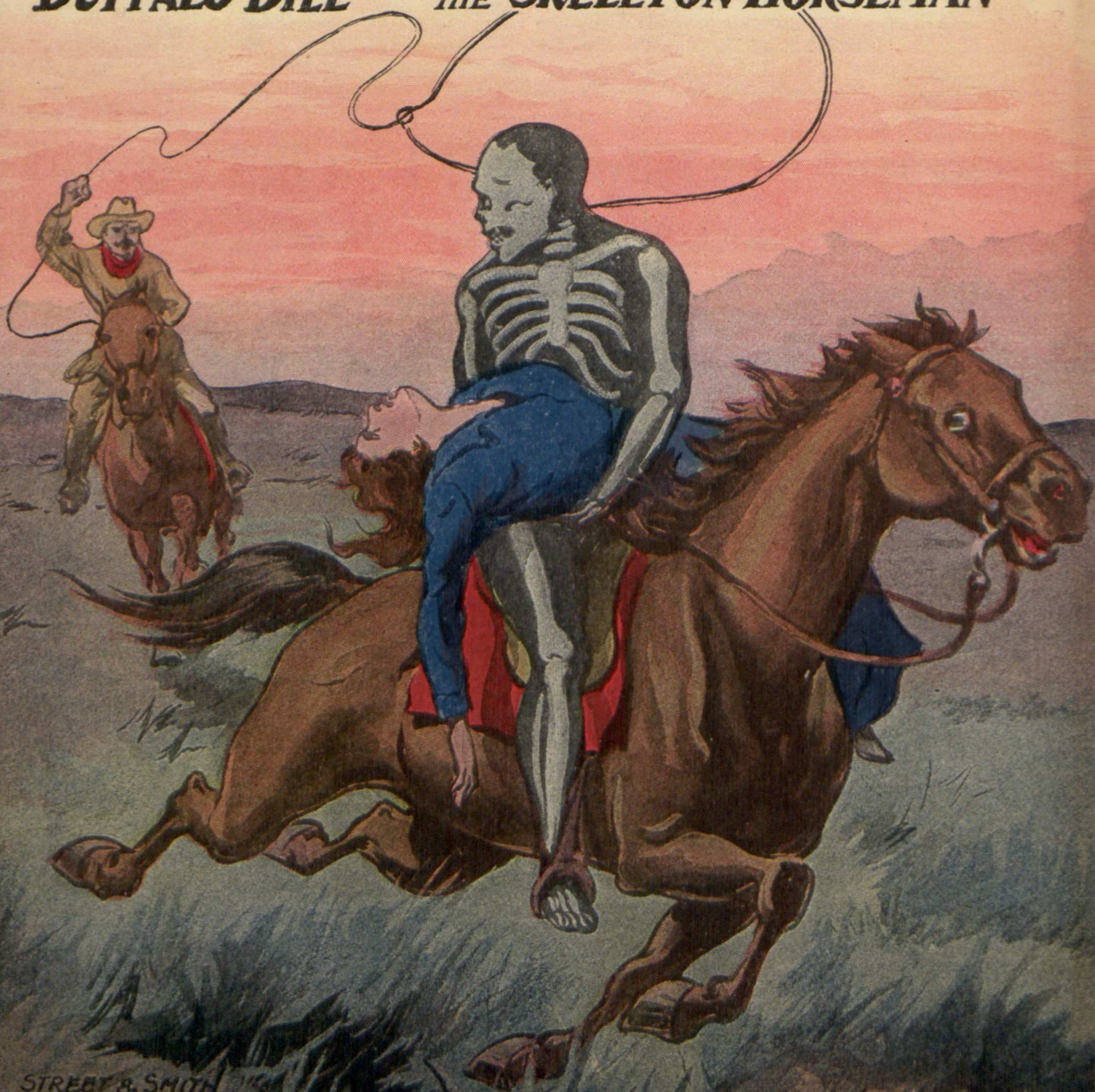
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Buffalo Bill Weekly

DEVOTED TO
FAR WEST LIFE

BUFFALO BILL AND THE SKELETON HORSEMAN



STREET & SMITH
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NEW BUFFALO BILL WEEKLY

Devoted To



Far West Life

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No. 85.

NEW YORK, April 25, 1914.

Price Five Cents.

Buffalo Bill and the Skeleton Horseman: Or, TETON JOHN, THE HALF-BLOOD.

By the author of "BUFFALO BILL."

CHAPTER I.

"DANGER."

When Buffalo Bill rode into the lively town of Rocket City, shortly after nightfall, one of the first things he saw was a big crowd gathered round a young woman who was standing in the middle of the street on a dry-goods box as a street faker, selling soap and giving away "valuable articles" to make sales.

Rocket City was well up in the edge of the Black Hills, at an early day, and its population consisted, in addition to the miners, of about as wild an element as could be found in the whole of the then wild West.

The crowd round the young woman was composed chiefly of this element, as the noted scout could see at a glance.

He drew rein in the street, and sat for a few minutes watching the woman and the mob of shouting and perspiring humanity surrounding her.

The sight of a female street faker was a novelty. Not only that, this woman was young and fairly good looking. She was dressed rather elegantly, and looked to be a lady. Yet she was heavily rouged, as any one could see.

Buffalo Bill rode on to the hotel, and, when he had seen his horse attended to, he walked back to where the crowd was, and found that the faker was doing a lively business.

In the little box beside her was a heap of greenbacks and gold.

The trick was an old one, yet it nearly always works. In almost every package of soap, of whose virtues she boasted, she pretended to drop a "present." These pres-

ents consisted of rings, and watch chains, and various small articles, which she declared to be gold-plated. Now and then into a package she thrust a bank bill.

There were, mixed with these, packages which, as every one could see, held no "presents"—nothing but the little cubes of soap.

Nine times in ten, when the purchaser opened the package he had bought, he found only the soap in it; for the faker was quick at palming, and the "presents" did not always, nor often, go in, even when they seemed to.

But the boisterous and hilarious crowd cared little whether the packages contained anything. They were having fun. And the faker kept piling up the gold and greenbacks in the box beside her.

Her eyes lighted on Buffalo Bill as soon as he reappeared, and the young faker singled him out for a possible customer.

"Now who gets the next prize?" she said, directing her eyes toward Buffalo Bill.

"Won't the gentleman try for this? This hasn't anything in it but soap and my good will. I think he'd better buy this package."

"Five dollars," said the scout promptly.

She threw it to him before any other bidder could lift his voice.

The mob closed about the scout to discover what "prize" he had drawn.

As she had said, there was, apparently, nothing in the package but the little cube of soap.

Buffalo Bill smiled, and put the soap and paper care-

fully in his pocket. He had seen writing on the paper—these words:

"You are in danger."

CHAPTER II.

TREACHERY.

Buffalo Bill left the crowd by and by, and went back to the hotel. He was determined to interview this woman, and discover what the warning meant.

The streaming into the hotel barroom of a number of men made the scout aware that the faker had stopped selling, and when he went to the door he saw the crowd was breaking up, and that the faker was gone.

"I must see her, and see what she meant!" he declared mentally. But he looked the town over, without finding a trace of her. She had simply ceased to sell in the street shortly after passing him that warning, and then had vanished.

"A queer thing!" was his thought. "And why did she give me that warning?"

He saw a mounted man ride by, sitting his horse with a certain swing and recklessness that arrested attention. There was something familiar in that figure, and a certain feeling, which can hardly be called a presentiment, caused him to think that it might be wise to follow this horseman.

Then he saw something else which quickened this feeling. The horseman drew rein, turned in the saddle, and looked back, as if to see if he was being followed.

Buffalo Bill turned about now, and, getting his own horse, he was soon galloping along the same street, pursuing the man who had so strangely attracted him.

Nevertheless, he could not throw off the feeling that in all this he was acting too much on impulse, and not enough on evidence and sound judgment.

The young horseman had disappeared beyond the town, but the scout rode so rapidly that shortly after leaving the house behind he heard the clatter of hoofs ahead of him.

Fearing that, inasmuch as he himself heard the sounds of hoofs, the horseman would be warned, the scout dismounted, and hastily wrapped the hoofs of his horse in cloth, thus making mufflers, which so killed the noise that the advance of his animal was almost soundless.

Then he rode on again; soon once more hearing that clatter of hoofs on ahead.

He observed that now and then the horseman drew rein, stopping as if to listen, apparently still fearing that he had been, or would be, followed.

Naturally, this suggested treachery and ambush, and he grew even more cautious.

Cody had ridden on for more than a mile in this way, when he became aware that the sounds of hoofs ahead of him had ceased. He drew rein to listen, thinking the man had once more stopped. Then he soon heard hoofbeats coming toward him from the direction of Rocket City.

He crowded his horse into some bushes by the trail, and sat there in silence and semidarkness, seeing a man quickly ride by him.

This was followed soon by the report of a revolver, the sound breaking on the quiet air with startling suddenness and distinctness.

Buffalo Bill rode out of the concealing bushes and dashed along the road, yet almost in silence, owing to

the muffled hoofs of his horse, and soon beheld a man bending over another who lay directly in the trail.

The man thus bending over the other immediately leaped up, sprang on the back of his animal, and galloped madly away.

The second man, who had been lying on the ground, apparently dead or seriously wounded, half rose to his feet, as Buffalo Bill drew near, and, leveling his revolver, fired straight at the scout.

Only the darkness and his uncertain aim kept him from shooting the scout. The bullet whistled through the air close by the latter's head.

"Hold, there!" Buffalo Bill shouted.

The revolver went up again and spouted its flame, and the ball cut through Buffalo Bill's coat.

The scout shouted another warning, and fired his revolver, striking the earth near the fellow's feet to emphasize that warning.

The man fell back spasmodically, as if he had been killed.

When the scout gained his side and leaped down, the seemingly wounded man again tried to shoot him, pulling up his revolver and pointing it at the scout's heart.

Buffalo Bill knocked the weapon down, and caught the man by the hands.

"See here!" he cried. "I think I don't care to eat any of your lead pills; so you will please stop shooting them at me."

The man sat up, gasping and staring.

"Who do you think I am?" the scout demanded.

"Why, the man who attacked and robbed me!"

"Well, you're mistaken."

The man dropped back as if he had been wounded and was weak.

Buffalo Bill released his hands and struck a match, flashing its light in the fellow's face.

"Are you the man who rode out of Rocket City a little while ago?" he asked.

"Who are you? I think you're the man who robbed me! I had two thousand dollars in my pocket, and now not a cent of it is there. Somebody rode upon me and shot at me, and I think you're the man."

He hitched along the ground and stared at the scout. The match flickered and went out. But it had given Buffalo Bill time to see that this was, or seemed to be, the horseman he had followed out of the town.

If this was that horseman, apparently the horseman had first lain in ambush for him, and, that failing, had tried to shoot him while pretending to believe him a robber and enemy.

Another horseman, from the town or elsewhere, had chanced to ride along at a time to interfere with this effort against the life of the scout.

"I think you're not just what you pretend to be," said Buffalo Bill, startling the man by the suddenness and boldness of the accusation. "But that will not prevent me from helping you all I can. Let me see where you are hurt."

He had thought, from a certain movement, that the man was wounded in the shoulder, and now, catching his wrist, he was about to strip the shirt and coat back from the arm.

With a cry and violent wrench, the man jerked the arm away. But even in the semidarkness—for there was some moonlight—the scout had seen—as he slipped up the

sleeves of the coat and shirt—a strange white line along the man's arm.

The man jerked the sleeves hastily into place, and rose to his feet.

"I'm not hurt," he said; "and I'll thank you to keep your hands off me!"

"Just as you say!"

Buffalo Bill also arose. He looked at the arm, and then at the man's face.

"Who are you?" he demanded.

"I don't know that it is any of your business! Who are you?"

"I am called Buffalo Bill. My name is Cody."

"What? Not William F. Cody, the scout?"

"The same."

The man's manner underwent a quick change.

"Then I'm glad and proud to meet you, and know you; and please forgive me for my abruptness. Of course, I was mistaken, and my suspicions without justification. But, Mr. Cody, I was positive when you rode up to me a minute ago that you were the man who attacked me here and robbed me; I thought you were returning to finish the job by putting me out of the way, so that I might never be a possible witness against you. It was an absurd idea, of course, but I held it."

The voice had changed, as well as the fellow's manner, and there was something in it which made the scout think he had heard it before.

"You did not ride out from Rocket City?" Cody asked.

The man seemed to hesitate, walking toward his horse, which had not been frightened away, but grazed near.

"I think I said I did not; but even if that were untrue, and I did come from that town?"

"Only that I followed a man who came from there; and, unless you deny it positively, I shall feel called to believe you are that man."

"Then I'll deny it; for I don't know what that rascal had been doing to cause you to pursue him. You see, I've got to deny it now!"

The man secured his horse and came back to where the scout stood in the trail, attentively regarding him.

"Mr. Cody," he said, "I can convince myself, at least, that I was wholly wrong in supposing you were the man who attacked me, if you'll turn back the bosom of your shirt a moment."

"What? How?"

"Well, it's a foolish idea, of course—that you can be that man! But when he stooped over me and took that roll of money, his shirt bosom fell open, and on his breast I saw the tracing of skeleton ribs, in what looked to be white paint or powder. If you're willing, I should like to satisfy myself."

"Satisfy yourself," said Buffalo Bill.

He threw open the bosom of his shirt.

"Again I beg your pardon, Cody! I was mistaken, and wronged you by having even an instant's suspicion against you. But you've heard of the skeleton horseman?"

"Some rumors only, before coming here, and they seemed rather wild."

"I think I struck that man to-night, or, rather, that he struck me—and robbed me. Two thousand dollars of good greenbacks, Mr. Cody, went from me to him; and, of course, I'll never get one of them back."

The scout secured his horse and remounted.

"It will be useless to try to pursue him in the night," said Cody. "He may have followed the trail, but more likely he left it, seeking safety in the wilder parts of the country. Which way do you go?"

"Toward the town, of course; I was going that way, when the thing happened. I believe you were headed in the other direction?"

"But I shall go toward the town, too, now. I followed that horseman, or some horseman, and lost him. So I've no further call to proceed. If you don't object, I'll accompany you."

"Object? That's a joke! Delighted to have the privilege of talking with a man so famed as Buffalo Bill!"

He swung into his saddle and turned the head of his horse toward the town.

"You spoke of skeleton markings, as of ribs," said the scout. "Permit me to say, that when I slipped your sleeve up, thinking to help you, I saw a queer white line on your arm."

He bent forward, looking the horseman closely in the face. The latter started violently, but regained self-control in an instant.

"Just the mark of a scar on my arm!" he said, with singular calmness. "Shall I show it to you?"

He slipped up the sleeve, and there the white line of a heavy scar showed.

"It's my turn to ask your pardon," said the scout. "But will you tell me why you drew your arm away so suddenly, when I tried to lift that sleeve?"

"Perhaps before we get into the town I'll tell you that."

Then he began to talk of the man who had attacked him, seeming to want to get away from the other subject.

As the town was approached, he grew confidential in manner and in words.

"Mr. Cody," he said, "I have concluded to make a confession to you. You've seen me, and heard my voice before."

"I thought so."

"In the main street of Rocket City. I sold you a piece of soap!"

"What?" cried the scout.

"It's not easy to recall a woman when she has turned herself into a man, and has removed the rouge and false hair," was the laughing reply. "You saw that box of greenbacks that I had gained this evening. That was the two thousand dollars that was stolen from me."

The scout was almost too much astonished to formulate the questions that tumbled through his mind.

"Why did you write that warning on the wrapper of the soap you sold me?" he asked.

"That warning?"

"On the wrapper of the cake of soap I bought of you?"

"Why, I don't know anything about any warning—I wrote none."

"Let's have an understanding about this!"

Buffalo Bill produced the cake of soap and the square of paper in which it had been folded. He drew a match and lighted it. The other horse had stopped; and by the light of the match the scout held up the paper so that the writing could be seen.

The rider who had just confessed to strange masquerading stared with a gasp of surprise.

"Let me see that!"

The scout held it out. The other read it again, by the flame of the dying match.

"If you don't object, I'll keep this; though I didn't write it!"

"You never saw it before?" Buffalo Bill asked.

"Never!"

Yet the voice trembled, as if knowing it told a lie.

"I never saw this before, Mr. Cody. It just happened to be on this bit of paper. I know where I got the paper, though, and I'd like to see if the party I got it of can explain this strange thing. It seems to have been intended to warn some one of danger. Perhaps it was meant for me. And, perhaps"—the voice quavered again—"it is just a practical joke, or may have been merely written without any meaning, or in fun, or idleness."

She thrust the paper away into a pocket, without waiting to get the scout's permission.

"Your name?" said Buffalo Bill. "This is very strange!"

"Irma Rand."

"And will you pardon me for asking what you are doing here?"

"You saw what I was doing, in the street—getting money away from fools too eager to part with it. This is the 'easiest' country I was ever in."

"Have you followed this occupation long?"

"No, only to-night. And I had a reason. I have a brother lost somewhere in this wild land. We don't know if he is living or dead. I came on here to find him. I needed money, to hire help, and for my expenses. I didn't know how to get it, when I hit on the plan by which you saw me raising money."

"I was afraid that when the fools came to their more sober senses they would come round to my hotel and make me disgorge, and I didn't want to do that. I needed the money. So I got my horse, disguised myself by putting on men's clothing, and secretly left the town. Then out there in the trail I was held up and robbed of every dollar I had made."

She seemed about to weep, taking out a handkerchief, and wiping her eyes.

"I saw you as you rode out of the place," he said. "However, I did not know it was you then, only that there was something familiar about you."

"Your eyes are keen," was the acknowledgment.

They were on the border of the town.

"Now, Mr. Cody, I haven't any money, because all I had was taken from me. But I have heard of your generosity and willingness to help those in need. Won't you help me to find my brother, even if I can't pay you?"

"I am here on a mission which will occupy me, but if, while pursuing that, I can aid you, I shall be happy to do so."

"You can't give me your whole time?"

"It would be quite impossible, much as I—"

Like a flash, the small right hand of the other rider went up, and the sentence of the scout was broken with—

"Then you'll not help anybody else!"

The revolver the strange rider had lifted spoke at the instant, and the scout pitched forward on the neck of his horse, and rolled heavily to the ground.

The treacherous rider stared down at the fallen form, as the scout's frightened horse reared and darted ahead; and again the revolver lifted.

"You followed me once, Buffalo Bill, but you'll never follow me a second time!"

The revolver flashed and roared again.

CHAPTER III.

WHITE BEAVER.

Another horseman rode along that lonely trail and into the outskirts of the town.

He was a somewhat shorter and thicker man than the noted scout, yet his general appearance was much the same; for his hair was long, his mustache and beard of the same cut, and he sat his horse with that elegant ease so attractive to the beholder, and which makes man and beast seem one.

The horseman was the noted White Beaver.*

He drew rein suddenly, seeing a horse feeding at the side of the trail, and a man lying in the trail in a doubled-up heap.

In another moment he had jumped to the ground and was running up to the man.

"Heavens! it's Cody!" he cried, as soon as he saw closely the familiar figure.

White Beaver caught up the scout's arm and pressed a finger on the pulse at his wrist, and bent over at the same time, pressing his ear against the scout's chest, to note the heart beats. Having done this, he struck a match and made a hasty examination, to determine the nature of Buffalo Bill's injuries.

He found a contusion on the top of the scout's head, and in his hat a bullet hole, showing that a bullet had furrowed its way through the hat, scraping the top of the head.

There seemed to be no other wound, and White Beaver began energetic efforts to restore the scout to consciousness, by pouring some whisky down his throat, and chafing his hands and limbs.

Within ten minutes, Cody opened his eyes, became conscious of his surroundings, and tried to sit up, though somewhat dazed.

"Hello! It's Powell!" he cried, when he recognized his friend.

"And arrived in time to find you laid out in the trail here! Somebody shot you!"

Buffalo Bill passed a hand across his forehead, as if to clear away the cobwebs that fogged his brain.

"Yes," he said, as recollection returned more fully. "I was shot, I guess. The young fellow did it."

"What young fellow?"

"I mean the young lady."

"I guess you're raving, Cody! Have a little more of this whisky."

The scout took a swallow, when the flask was held to his lips.

"No, I'm not raving, Powell. It was a young woman, dressed as a man. I thought at first she was a man. I'll tell you about it, as soon as my head gets a little clearer. Just now there seems to be a Sioux war drum beating in the top of my head, and it makes me dizzy to hear it."

*Doctor Frank Powell, skilled as a physician, as well as famous as a border scout and Indian fighter, known to the Winnebagoes and other Indian tribes as "White Beaver," mayor at one time of a Western city, died during the winter of 1905. He was for many years the "pard" and friend of Buffalo Bill. He has appeared as a character in a number of these stories.

"No hurry about it, Cody. Take it easy."

He stepped to his horse and took his medicine case from the saddle pouch. When he came back he had some white powder in a paper.

"Just put that in your mouth, Cody, and swallow it. It will help you."

Buffalo Bill obeyed. He had great faith in the healing powers of his friend's medicine, as the doctor's skill was well known.

He did feel better in a little while; so much better that he told Doctor Powell his strange adventures, and a singular story it seemed.

"The young woman must have done some tall lying," was White Beaver's comment.

"Hello!" said Buffalo Bill. "I believe I'm wounded in the leg!"

"A bullet hole through your trousers, Cody, and the ball burned you as it passed over your leg. It barely touched the skin," said Powell.

"I think I'm not to be killed by bullets!" said the scout humorously.

"You don't think now that when she gave you that soap with the written warning, she really meant the warning for you?" asked Powell.

Buffalo Bill sat a moment in thought before answering this.

"It doesn't seem so, Powell. That warning must have been intended for her. By some mistake she wrapped it round that soap, and it came to me. She certainly didn't intend to hand that out."

"I wish we knew which direction she took, after shooting you?"

"Back along the trail probably."

Buffalo Bill got on his feet again and found his strength growing.

Powell secured and brought up the scout's horse, and then his own. Buffalo Bill needed only a little assistance in mounting his horse. White Beaver mounted now, and the two friends rode slowly on into the town together.

"There has been a daring rider, holding up the stages lately," said Buffalo Bill. "You recall what I said about the skeleton rider, and of the white scar on that girl's arm?"

"You don't think she can be that skeleton rider?"

"It hardly seems possible, but I am puzzled."

CHAPTER IV.

POKER PETE.

Buffalo Bill had so far recovered by the next morning, under the skillful treatment of the surgeon scout, that he was able to leave his room and walk about the town.

Powell had come on to Rocket City at the request of Buffalo Bill, where they were to begin together a man hunt.

Prairie Bob, a young man who had been noted over in Nebraska for some criminal affair, had shot and killed a sheriff, and then had fled. This sheriff was a friend of Buffalo Bill, and the scout had taken Prairie Bob's trail. He had lost it, and the young murderer had made good his escape. That had been more than six months before. Then Buffalo Bill had heard of a young outlaw who seemed to answer to Prairie Bob's description. This outlaw was operating on the stage trail that ran between Rocket City and Deadwood, a branch line of the famous

Deadwood train, and certain things had made the scout suspect that this "road agent" was the man he was seeking.

But there were reports, also, of other road agents on that trail; and then a peculiar report, which declared that the young road agent suspected by the scout had been doing a sensational "skeleton-rider" act. These reports were in the scout's mind. They did not fit into any suspicion he might have had that the girl who had sold soap on the street, and afterward had shot him, could be this young outlaw. Prairie Bob was said to be a "dead shot." Certainly the young woman, in this instance, could not claim that distinction.

Both Buffalo Bill and Doctor Frank Powell made a search through Rocket City, to ascertain, if possible, if the girl had returned into the town, but they discovered nothing to bolster Powell's belief.

The town was wildly hilarious that day, owing to a new gold strike in the near-by hills.

Most prominent among the men who were "jubilating" was a young gambler called by his friend Poker Pete. Buffalo Bill met him in the "Gilt Edge," a saloon and gaming house where the so-called better class of the gambling population was wont to congregate. This young man was drinking. He had, apparently, an unlimited supply of money. His loud voice, and the airy manner in which he threw greenbacks down on the bar when he called for drinks, could but attract attention.

The scout had come up to the bar, and, turning round by it, while he leaned carelessly against it, smoking a cigar, he was taking in the place with his searching eyes.

It was then that he observed Poker Pete, and that the latter became aware of the scout's presence.

Poker Pete stopped, in hesitation, while his face grew a shade paler; and then he walked with a swagger past the scout, with the friends who were with him, and, with a wave of his hand, threw some bills on the bar.

One of them, a five-dollar bill, fell near the scout. He reached out his hand and took it, and looked at it intently.

Poker Pete turned on him like a flash. "That's my money!" he snarled.

"I suppose you wouldn't mind telling me just where you got this bill?" said the scout calmly.

"What's it to you?"

"I've a reason for asking."

"Well, then, I stole it! Barkeeper, set 'em up!" he called; "set 'em up for the whole house."

He put out his hand and pushed the bills toward the barkeeper, while behind him came the sound of many feet of men pressing toward the bar to accept this lavish invitation.

But Buffalo Bill retained possession of the greenback.

"Would you mind telling me where you got this?" he insisted.

"Tell me why you want to know, and then maybe I will."

"I'll do that. I paid it out last night for a cake of soap, to the girl who sold soap on the streets."

"And she gave it to me, because she loved me!"

Cody released the bill and stepped back from the bar.

Retreating toward the door, to get out of the crush, where Cody stood looking with seeming carelessness over the crowd. Once more he had a mixed and puzzled feeling. In the face of this young fellow there seemed to

be something to suggest another face, and in the voice a something to suggest another voice.

"Can that be the girl, who posed as a horseman, and shot me? If that is the girl, and the girl is Poker Pete; or if he is really Poker Pete, and only masqueraded as a girl, then— The whole surmise is ridiculous," was his thought. "And as to that greenback, the girl probably paid it to some one, and it came into this fellow's hands. There's, of course, no way of tracing it. If she was robbed out on the trail, as she claimed, the one who robbed her may have passed it, and—" Again he stopped. "By George! Could she have been really robbed, and this man the robber?"

When he returned to the hotel, and Powell came in, he told Powell of Poker Pete and the greenback.

"You're feverish, Cody," said Powell, "and you ought to be in bed. It's the result of that wound. Let me look at it. And then I'll go out and make some inquiries about this Poker Pete."

CHAPTER V.

TETON JOHN, THE HALF-BLOOD.

In spite of White Beaver's admonition, Buffalo Bill was soon drawn to the window of his room by sounds of confusion and a fight out in the street.

Powell had scented the coming of this fight shortly after leaving the hotel, and while he was asking some questions of an acquaintance.

"Poker Pete," said this acquaintance, "is a man who likes gun trouble, and some day he's goin' down wi' a bullet in him. The feller's reckless, Powell; that's the secret; and he's reckless because he's got some kind of memories that troubles him. It's the way of some fellers. They go wild, thinking it's a good way to fergit."

"Does he stay close in Rocket City?"

"He's gone for days and weeks at a time."

"He owns a gold mine! He's been celebrating the discovery, or the opening, of a vein in it. Likely when he is out of town he is at that mine."

"That's where he says he is."

Poker Pete had been treating with remarkable liberality, and he had not forgotten to take a drink himself. He was so intoxicated that when he beheld Frank Powell, standing just outside the hotel main entrance, he mistook him for Buffalo Bill.

"You insulted me a while ago," he howled, "and I ain't settled with you yet for it. Git ready fer me, when I make my run fer ye!"

He tried to draw a revolver, but one of his friends seized him and kept him from doing it. At the next corner he broke away from them.

A man had come out of one of the many saloons. This man was a rather well-known figure in Rocket City, and also a remarkable one; for he was none other than Teton John, the half-blood. His mother was said to be a full-blood Sioux, and his father a white gambler.

Teton John seemed much more of a white man than an Indian. His features were those of a white man, in most respects. Yet his face was dark and beardless, like the face of an Indian, though not nearly so dark.

Teton John was a gambler, who lived two lives. For months he would be seen in Rocket City and other towns of the border, where he played poker interminably. Then he would mysteriously disappear. Some said that at such

times he went to the village of the Teton Sioux, which was not distant from Rocket City; and there were queer reports, of how there he lapsed into savagery, took off the white man's clothing, donned blanket, paint, and feathers, and even took part in the wild dances and the Indian orgies.

Yet he was not always at the Teton village when he was absent from the border towns, and then his acquaintances could not account for his whereabouts. But it had been noticed by some that at such times the hold-ups on the stage trails increased in numbers and frequency, as well as in daring, and that the most of the hold-ups were made by a single horseman who was well mounted, well armed, daring and bold, and always masked his face.

Occasionally this mysterious horseman, or another, appeared as a skeleton rider, terrifying in appearance, and frightening the women and children of the stages half out of their wits.

When Poker Pete saw Teton John issue from the doorway of the saloon, and start across the street, he gave a wild yell, and fired at him.

Teton John turned to run. He feared to shoot at the gambler, lest he should hit some one else; and he knew that a half-breed Indian would receive little consideration if by mistake he killed a white man who was innocent of any intention of wronging him.

As Teton John thus turned in flight, Poker Pete yelled again, and sent a second bullet after him, cutting the dirt close by his feet.

Staggering in pursuit, and yelling like a maniac, Poker Pete sent every shot out of his revolver after the fleeing half-blood. The last shot apparently took effect, for Teton John rolled in the dust of the street.

Poker Pete yelled triumphantly when he saw his foe fall, and ran on toward him at a staggering gait.

Then he beheld what seemed a singular sight, and something that angered him.

Powell also saw it, as well as Buffalo Bill, who had been drawn to the window of his room by the shots and the noise.

An old borderman had been coming down the street on a shaggy-headed, raw-boned beast. He carried a rifle as long as himself, and squinted his eyes and puckered his mouth into queer wrinkles as he glanced about him. He sat in his saddle humped up like a ball, and seemed to roll along rather than to be riding.

The shaggy-headed horse was sleepy-eyed and seemingly lazy. It stopped now and then to kick at a fly, and, forgetting to put its foot down, after a second lifted the foot higher and scratched with it along the shaggy hide.

At such times the old borderman objurgated it with his tongue.

"Nebuchadnezzar, you ole fool, git erlong wi' ye! You're gittin' so consarned lazy that ther buzzards will come down some time and pick yer ole bones clean, while you're soppin' and dreamin'; fer they'll think ye're dead. Git along hyar, and quit yer foolin'!"

Teton John fell just in front of this strange figure, rolling over as if killed, in the dust of the street.

The old borderman stared when he saw the man fall. Then, with a spryness that appeared surprising, he leaped to the ground and ran forward to assist the fallen man.

It was this act of humanity that offended Poker Pete.

The old borderman knelt at the side of Teton John, lifting the head of the fallen man. As he did so, and stared into the man's face, and at his bosom, where his shirt and coat had fallen open, he whistled in surprise.

"Waal, may I be durned!" he exclaimed.

He began an examination, to ascertain the man's condition, still muttering, apparently forgetful of the crowd that was looking at him, and of Poker Pete, who, with howls of anger, was advancing toward him.

He was lifting Teton John, when, with a quick wriggle and jump, the half-breed shot out of his arms, and, with two quick steps, had crossed to where the shaggy-headed beast stood. In another instant he was in the saddle, and had turned the horse about, and was urging it along the street.

The old horse seemed so much astonished by all this, and by the stranger who kicked at his leathery sides, that he burst into a gait that bore him along in a way that was wonderful to behold.

The old borderman stared and whistled, and seemed unable to believe his eyes. "Waal, may I be durned," he cried.

He put his fingers to his lips, and blew a blast that shrilled along the street like the whistle of a steam engine.

When the shaggy-headed horse heard that, his big ears lifted, and he seemed to double up, and, as he did so, he stopped, with a suddenness that shot Teton John sprawling out of the saddle, landing him again in the dust, where he rolled over just as when the bullet of Poker Pete had brought him down.

But he did not lie there. He sprang up, stared at the horse, and at the crowd that was again moving toward him, shook his fist at the crowd, and then set out toward the end of the street, running with something of a limp, yet with a speed that was very creditable.

It was much better speed than Poker Pete could get out of his own staggering legs, or any of his friends could get out of theirs.

CHAPTER VI.

OLD NICK NOMAD.

The old borderman was that whimsical character, old Nick Nomad, and his shaggy-headed horse was the trained trick beast, Nebuchadnezzar.

"Whoa, Nebby, consarn ye!" the old fellow bellowed, as the horse came galloping back to him. "Waal, ye kited him some, I reckon. He hit terry firmy hard ernough to knock a hole in it."

Poker Pete and his followers had advanced, howling at the old frontiersman.

"What is it ye want o' me?" said Nomad, puckering his face and looking at Poker Pete mildly.

"You interfered in my gun play," cried Poker Pete. "I shoot men fer that."

"Oh, ye do? Waal, I'd advise ye, when ye start in ter shootin' of this ole customer, that you do yer shootin' good and proper, er when it comes my turn I'll fix ye so's 't yer friends will be 'bleeged ter plant ye. Ye don't know me, I reckon?"

Nebuchadnezzar, seeing that the youth was a foe of his master, had bared his teeth.

The next moment would have witnessed further trouble in the street there, if Nomad had not at the instant

beheld Frank Powell pushing through the crowd to get to him.

Powell, as a pard of Buffalo Bill, was one of Nomad's warmest friends, and for him the old man had a great admiration.

Apparently he forgot, or ignored, Poker Pete, as he bellowed, in his creaking, high-keyed voice:

"White Beaver, by ther Eternal! Nebby, thar's White Beaver!"

He clutched the rein of the bridle, bringing Nebby's head up with a jerk, and, waving the rifle, he began to urge the beast toward Powell.

Nomad's withered face seemed to have cracked wide open in a huge grin of delight. His big mouth was spread from ear to ear.

"Waal, of all ther sights I never expected ter see, it's ther White Beaver on this hyar trail! Put her thar, Powell!"

The shaggy-headed beast plunged through the crowd, scattering it, and in another moment White Beaver was shaking hands with the old trapper.

"Fer ther last two nights I been dreamin' er angels! Says I ter Nebby, says I, 'It's a sign that ther ole man is nearin' ther end of his airthly trail!' Now I sees thet it meant I was ter meet you. Whar's Buffler?"

"In the hotel here."

The old man caught sight of Buffalo Bill's beaming face at the hotel window. His ancient and disreputable cap came off and was swung with a whoop of delight.

"Waugh! Thar he is! Whoo-ee-oop! Nebby, thar he is!"

It was a pull on the bit, no doubt, which made the ugly horse open his mouth, but it seemed that Nebuchadnezzar was smiling, also, with joy at beholding Buffalo Bill.

"Buffler, he rec'ernizes ye!" said Nomad.

"How are you, Nomad?" the scout called down to him, waving his hand.

"Buffler, fine as silk! Every year thet I gits older I grows jes' two years younger."

Poker Pete had trailed along.

"But, see here," he was saying, "you cut into my game!"

"Waugh! Hyar your air ag'in, and bur durn ef I didn't think it war a muskeeter buzzin' round my ears! What air ye wantin' now?"

"You put in where you had no call to."

"Bubby, don't let yer head swell so's it'll bu'st yer hat! I don't know ye, and I don't want no trouble wi' ye. Shoo! Lemme 'lone. I'm talkin' wi' gentlemen."

But he swung his rifle forward again, and his little gray eyes began to glitter.

Seeing that in his intoxicated state, Poker Pete would start further trouble, his friends again dragged him away.

Buffalo Bill came down from the room, and he and Powell continued their greetings to the old man.

"Poker Pete is spoiling for a fight," said Buffalo Bill. "That was, I am told, Teton John, the half-blood, that you tried to help out there in the street, Nomad. He was scared good, when he tried to bolt on the back of Nebuchadnezzar."

A queer and meaning smile came to Nomad's weather-beaten face.

"Buffler," he said, and he bent forward so that the statement could not be heard beyond the group, "I got a funny look at that feller's anatomy, and I know who he

is. You won't believe it, likely; but thet thar critter is ther road agent that's called round hyar ther Skeleton Horseman."

"What? You don't mean it!"

"Never meant anything more'n I do thet, Buffler. Ye see, I had a good chanst. When he lay thar on his back in the dust, his coat and shirt had fell open, and thar on his breast war painted white ribs, jes' like ther ribs of a skeleton."

Frank Powell was as much astonished as Buffalo Bill.

"Have your horse put away, Nomad, and come into the hotel, and we'll talk this over. It's of the utmost importance."

A little later they were in Buffalo Bill's room upstairs.

"If that's true, Nomad, it upsets some of the conclusions that were being reached by Powell and myself."

"I knows what I sees, Buffler," Nomad insisted. "I had a good look. The skeleton ribs were painted on him?"

"This is truly surprising," White Beaver admitted.

"You see, Nomad," the scout explained, "certain things had led us to believe that another person was the skeleton horseman. And we were almost reaching the conclusion that that person and Poker Pete were one and the same individual."

The old man stared.

"Poker Pete?" he gasped. "How d'yer make thet out?"

"There was a young woman selling soap on the street last evening, who sold me a cake of soap, on the wrapper of which was a warning. Later in the evening I followed a young fellow out on the trail, and that young fellow, after shooting at another person, tried to kill me, pretending it a mistake. That young fellow confessed that 'he' was the girl who had sold me the cake of soap, but denied knowing anything about the warning. While riding back to town with him, or her, he, or she, shot me."

"Shot ye?" Nomad gasped.

Buffalo Bill showed the wound on the top of his head.

"Powell found me unconscious in the trail, and brought me round."

"Whar that feller Poker Pete?" asked Nomad.

"To-day, Poker Pete passed a greenback, which was the very one I handed over to that girl for the cake of soap. He looks, in his general appearance, very much like her; with the changes which could be made, and the change of clothing, he could look just like her. So we had about reached the conclusion that Poker Pete was the girl, or that the girl is Poker Pete, whichever way you may put it."

"But, ef—"

"Just so! If Teton John is the skeleton horseman, Poker Pete can't be, and that girl can't be."

"Ef she's really a gal, she'd be considable gritty ter play that skeleton bizness, Buffler."

"True enough. But we figured that Poker Pete had masqueraded as a girl—as that girl."

"Waugh! I guess ye're plum' off ther trail, Buffler. I seen ther ribs of ther skeleton horseman, and my ole eyes don't deceive me often."

"I've told you of the white stripe I thought I saw on the arm of that 'girl'?" said the scout.

"An' arterwards ye seen it war a white scar!"

"But I've thought since that I might have been fooled by her."

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE TRAIL OF POKER PETE.

In order to find some thread that might unravel this mystery, Doctor Frank Powell spent much of the remainder of the day in shadowing Poker Pete, while Buffalo Bill and old Nomad remained in the scout's room, talking of old times and old experiences together.

Poker Pete disappeared during the afternoon, apparently because he was unable to continue his hilarious round of saloons and gaming hells. But shortly after dark he reappeared, in a stealthy manner, mounted a horse, and took the trail out of town that led toward Deadwood.

"I think we'd better follow him," Powell said to Cody and Nomad. "The horses are ready—I've seen to that, and we can overtake him in a few minutes, if we try. I'd like to see where he's going. The mine he claims to own doesn't lie in that direction."

The three friends hastened now from the hotel, and to the stable where their horses were kept; and shortly rode out of the town on the trail taken by Poker Pete. They soon came in sight of him, observing which he trotted ahead at a faster pace. However, they hung in his rear in a persistent manner, and for a while he was out of their sight seldom more than a minute or two at a time.

Some miles out of the town they saw him ride into a scrubby timber belt by the trail.

"Ah! he thinks he's clever!" said Buffalo Bill. "He's gone in there, thinking we didn't notice it, and that we'll ride on past him."

"Shall we ride straight ahead?" said Powell. "We could fool him, and get a better look at him by also going into the timber beyond this point."

They rode ahead, in accordance with this plan, and, when they had passed the timber belt, they themselves went into hiding.

It seemed a queer game of hide-and-seek.

"Best way ter fool him in ther world is this," said Nomad.

He gave Nebuchadnezzar a crack on the legs and sent him clattering on down the trail.

"He'll overtake Nebby and see that no one is on him," said Powell.

Nomad chuckled gleefully.

"Which shows 't yer don't know Nebby. Now watch the cute critter."

Old Nebuchadnezzar clattered along the trail with noisy gait for some distance, and then he vanished.

"See thet!" cried Nomad. "He's gone inter ther bushes, too, and thar thet clever beast is layin', jes' fer all ther world like an ambushin' Injun."

Scarcely had Nebby's hoofs ceased to sound, and it seemed that the three horsemen had gone on, when, near the point where Poker Pete had gone into hiding, the bushes were seen to wave in the dim moonlight.

But when the horseman who was there came out into sight the three watchers stared.

They beheld the skeleton horseman, his face masked, and the skeleton lines showing with a distinctness that was startling. He seemed in reality a skeleton sitting on the back of his horse, at that distance.

Instead of following the trail, the skeleton horseman struck out into the open country, and swung round their hiding place in a big semicircle that took him again into

the trail far beyond them, and beyond Nebby's hiding place.

The old man jumped out of the bushes and ran down the trail in the moonlight, while his companions rode at his side, until they came to the point where the shaggy-headed horse had disappeared.

"He's levanted and left you," said Buffalo Bill humorously.

It did seem that Nebuchadnezzar was nowhere near.

"Ther cute devil is layin' down," said Nomad. "That's why we can't see him, and no hidin' Injun kin keep stiller'n the creeter kin when he knows he ort to."

In proof of it he whistled, and the knowing old beast came up out of the bushes only a few yards from them.

"Waugh! Buffler, thar ain't no end ter the tricks I've teacht this hyar brute. That's one of 'em; and thar aire others that reely make him seem a'most human."

"Now, to follow the skeleton horseman," said Powell. "He's got a good start of us."

Truly he had, for he was out of sight.

"What do you think of Teton John now?" said Buffalo Bill.

"Buffler, when I seen thet, I stopped thinkin' intirely. When ther hole in ther ladder ain't big ernough, 'tain't no use ter try ter peek through it. Ther hole in this hyar ladder is plum closed up."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STAGE HOLDUP.

An hour later, at the point where the Rocket City trail to Deadwood crosses the trail that leads from Crescent Butte to the gold camps on the Fryingpan River, the three friends heard shots, a number in quick succession, and a wild scream.

The three horsemen flew along the trail. When they came to the scene of the holdup—for it was really one—they saw the stage before them, with the horses snarled in their harness, the driver dead on the ground, and a number of frightened men and women standing in a huddled group.

The scared passengers apparently thought that more terrifying and shooting road agents were upon them, for the women began to scream when they saw the three horsemen, and some of the men put up their hands.

Buffalo Bill and his companions drew rein before this startled group.

"We're friends," the scout announced.

"Thank Heaven for that!" cried the fat man.

He waddled heavily forward, becoming spokesman for the party.

"Gentlemen," said one of the men, "we were attacked a little while ago, by a man who seemed to be a skeleton! But he was a man, for he swore some terrible oaths, and then he shot the driver, and made us all line up here and put up our hands, after which he robbed us."

"He took my diamond necklace!" wailed a pretty girl, whose white face and disheveled hair could not hide her beauty even under the poor light of the moon. "My diamond necklace, that my—my father gave me!"

"You may be thankful that you're alive," said the scout. "Now, can you tell me how this skeleton horseman looked—his size and general appearance?"

But they could not do that—they had been too badly

scared to take note of his appearance. Besides, he had worn a mask.

Buffalo Bill and his friends dismounted and straightened out the tangle among the horses, putting them in the trail again.

"Is there a man here who can drive?" the scout asked. "We want to try to round up this skeleton rascal. It's no more than five miles to the little camp of Ophir, and as it's on this trail, you can't miss it."

One of the passengers, a young fellow who had said little, volunteered now to try to drive the stage on to Ophir. So the body of the dead stage driver was placed on top of the stage, and strapped there to keep it from rolling about, and the young man mounted to the box, took the reins, and started the horses.

"Now, to follow that fellow!" said the scout, when the stage had rattled on out of sight.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MYSTERY AT DAKOTA DAN'S CABIN.

Following the skeleton horseman was no easy task, even though there was now a bright moonlight.

Buffalo Bill and his companions were compelled to trust to their common sense and judgment as much as to their eyesight.

At length Nick Nomad swung out of his saddle, at a point where a faint path led from the larger trail.

"Buffler," he said, when he had knelt and made a close examination of the ground there, "this hyar critter has gone this way, I'm purty shore. Hyar's whar thar's fresh cuttin' of the ground made by hoofs, and that proves it, ter my mind. And in thet direction lays ther village of ther Teton Sioux. Buffler, it seems ter go ter prove my 'riginal belief, thet ther skeleton is Teton John."

"But you saw him come out of those bushes, and when he went into them he was the young chap we'd followed from Rocket City," said Powell.

"Mebbe ther feller thet come outer them bushes warn't jes' ther same feller thet went inter 'em," Nomad argued. "We ain't no way o' knowin' thet it war ther same. An' I can't fergit thet I seen them skeleton ribs on Teton John."

"We'll follow this trail," said the scout, who had swung down, and was also inspecting it. "I think the road agent went this way."

By and by they found another small divergent trail, which they inspected. Nomad, who was better acquainted with that section than his companions, was puzzled, for here, when examined closely by the light of a match, were found again the hoofprints they had seen at the entrance to the other path.

"Over thar lays ther cabin o' my old friend, Dakoty Dan," said Nomad.

"He's a square man, Nomad?" asked the scout.

"He used ter be, Buffler, so fur as ever I knowed, and I'm figgerin' thet he is yit. I ain't been ter his place in more'n five years, and it's been nighabout thet many sense I've seen him; but he war counted square."

Following this trail, they came at length in sight of a light that gleamed from a cabin window.

"I think we'd better go careful here," said the scout, again dismounting. The horses were left behind, concealed, and the three men went on toward the house on foot.

As they approached the window, seeing that the cabin was large and roomy, they beheld, in the room lighted by the lamp, a young woman, or girl, seated in close talk with the youth they had followed from Rocket City.

"Poker Pete!" said the scout.

Old Nomad rubbed his eyes and looked again.

"I furgot ter tell ye thet old Dakoty had a gal. But she war a leetle thing when I seed her last, and that sorter made me fergit her, I reckon. Ef thet's her, she's shore growed aout of my recomembrance. But I reckon it's her. But thet she could be snugglin' up ter Poker Pete is what amazes me, Buffler."

"I think we're justified in usin' a bit of eavesdropping here," said the scout.

The three scouts then advanced toward the window.

Then their astonishment was increased, for they saw the young fellow put a hand into his pocket and take out a diamond necklace, which he put round the girl's neck.

"Ther diamond necklace that ther stage woman said was took from her by ther skeleton horseman!" said Nomad, with another gurgle of astonishment. "My theery is not only lame, but it's plum' hamstrung, and can't walk a step funder. I goes under. Poker Pete is sure ther critter thet held up ther stage."

"We've got to capture him," said the scout.

"Yas."

"Step right up to the door and knock," said Powell. "Nomad and I will see that he doesn't get away, if he makes a break."

Buffalo Bill stepped to the door and hammered on it peremptorily.

The lamp went out instantly, plunging the room into darkness, the girl screamed, and there was a scuffling of feet in the house.

The scout jumped back from the door, drawing his revolver, and Powell and Nomad stood ready, with weapons in hand, to stop the expected rush of Poker Pete from the place.

But after that scream and the rush of feet, nothing more was heard. The lamp was not relighted, and utter silence reigned.

"Hello, in there!" called the scout.

There was no answer. Then Nomad lifted his voice.

"Dakoty, yer old pard's out hyar, waitin' ter take yer by ther fin ag'in. Open up ther door, fer ther latch-string seems ter be missin'."

There was a movement in the house now, and then the light of the lamp showed again, and the young woman came to the door, holding the lamp.

When she opened the door she looked pale, but composed.

"What is it?" she said. "My father isn't at home to-night."

Nomad stepped forward.

"I'm ole Nick Nomad," he explained. "Yer don't recommember me, mebbe, but I reck'lects of seein' you when you warn't more'n knee high ter a grasshopper."

Shielding the light with her hand, she now saw Buffalo Bill and Frank Powell behind Nomad.

"I don't remember you," she said, "and my father isn't at home to-night."

The scout advanced, lifting his hat, an act which revealed the white cloth on the top of his head, giving his head a queer, bald look.

"Miss," he said, "we saw in that room a moment ago, before the lamp went out, a young man we should like to have a few words with. If you'll permit us to enter we'll be obliged to you, or if you will send him out here."

She did not hesitate, nor did her voice change.

"That's a singular statement!" she declared. "There has been no young man here to-night!"

Buffalo Bill and those with him were considerably taken aback by this brazen falsehood.

"You don't mean to insist that we saw no one—that no one was with you in that room a moment or so ago?"

"I certainly don't know what you're talking about," she asserted. "I'm alone here. Father is away, and if you are gentlemen you'll not trouble a lonely girl."

"We hope that we're gentlemen," the scout answered, "but we saw Poker Pete in that room with you a moment or so ago, and we want him."

She stepped back from the door.

"You're at perfect liberty to search the house, if you'll go away peaceably when you're through. There's been no man here, and you insult me when you say there has been."

"Stay outside and watch for him," said the scout to his friends.

He put his foot across the threshold, still with hat in hand.

"We accept your permission to look through the house," he said to her.

She moved back from the door, carrying the lamp, and placed it on the table where they had first seen it.

"This is an outrage!" she panted, eying him fiercely.

He saw that she was pale and agitated, yet not terrified. She was a girl of courage and spirit, and, besides, a handsome girl, and something in her face startled him. The scout could not marvel that Poker Pete had thought it worth his while to ride out to this distant spot to pay court to so handsome a woman.

"It's unpleasant to have to do this," he apologized, "but I shall have to make an examination of this room."

"Look where you please," she said icily.

The room contained a bed and a stove, and some chairs, a trunk, some boxes, and other things. The furniture was of the simplest character.

The scout had observed that the dress she wore was identical with the dress worn by "Irma Rand," the girl who had sold soap in the streets of Rocket City.

He looked at it critically, and with a boldness that angered her. He had observed, too, that the features of this girl resembled in a remarkable degree those of "Irma Rand," as he recalled them. He had seen "Irma Rand" only by moonlight.

Poker Pete's features, he had also remarked, were, in their general outline, like those of "Irma Rand."

It was as if this girl and Poker Pete had been sister and brother, and "Irma Rand" a near relative. The family likeness was so strong as to be startling. Yet if this girl had played the part of "Irma Rand," there had been a good deal of paint and "make-up" used. And that was true, also, if Poker Pete had played the part of "Irma Rand."

"You're insulting," the girl said, as the scout thus stared at her.

"I beg your pardon. But, really, you look so like Irma Rand that I stared at you without intention of offending."

"I am Maud Robinson, the daughter of Dakota Dan Robinson," was the girl's reply.

"You were not in Rocket City last night?"

"No!" she snapped, with a sharp and vinegary tongue. "You came in here to look for some one, as you refused to believe my word. Why don't you look for him?"

"Very true. I will look for him."

It did not take long to look into every corner of the room, and under and behind every article of its furniture.

The girl seated herself and watched him with an interest that was marked and significant.

"I didn't know," she said sarcastically, "that a man had a right to go into a house and do as you're doing, even out in this wild country. My father will take pleasure in shooting you for this when he comes home."

Buffalo Bill displayed his badge as an officer.

"There is another room, I think?" he said.

She rose and opened the door leading into the other room.

"Look in there, too, and perhaps you'd better look on the roof!"

The other room was much like the first, and the scout soon covered it. He was sure that Poker Pete was in the house, yet Poker Pete was not to be found.

Finally the scout returned to the other room.

The girl had been watching him from the connecting doorway. She retreated before him, and saw him look at the walls.

"Miss Robinson," he said, "you'll pardon me for plain speaking. I know that Poker Pete is in this house."

"Then why don't you find him?"

"There's some hidden door which I haven't been able to locate. But he can't escape us. We'll simply camp down here until hunger drives him out."

"My father will pitch you out, as soon as he comes home. And that hidden-door idea is silly. Where is there a place for a hidden door?"

"Under the floor, probably."

"There isn't even a cellar under the house."

"But Poker Pete was in here, and he has had no chance to get away."

"And I say no one was here but me!"

"Pardon me for saying it, Miss Robinson, but you're an extraordinary young woman."

"Thanks!" she replied curtly. "I don't appreciate the compliment, if one is meant."

"You resemble Poker Pete in a singular manner, and I—"

"Perhaps I am Poker Pete!" she said, with a toss of her head. "The idea is no more silly than that other one."

"Perhaps not. Yet you resemble him. And you resemble the girl—if it was a girl—who told me her name was Irma Rand."

"I think you must be a bit crazy. And let me say to you that I don't even know who you are. Perhaps you are robbers, and are looking for my father's money?"

She smiled bitterly on him, and her face was pale.

"There is a bit of treasure that I and my friends saw in here, Miss Robinson, that I should like to see again. I speak of the diamond necklace."

She showed renewed agitation, and tried to conceal it.

"The diamond necklace!" she cried.

"The one that Poker Pete put round your neck."

"If I am Poker Pete, as you seem to hint, how could he put a diamond necklace round my neck? I begin to feel sure you are crazy."

"I didn't think you were Poker Pete. I only remarked on the striking resemblance. We saw him place a diamond necklace round your neck. And, Miss Robinson, that diamond necklace was taken by the road agent known as the skeleton horseman from a lady on the stage not two hours ago. So you'll see why I said I'd like to get a look at it again."

She laughed, but there was no mirth in the laughter; it sounded rather hysterical.

"You're a fool, if not crazy, Mr.—"

"Cody is my name! I'm called Buffalo Bill."

She opened her eyes a trifle wider.

"Mr. Buffalo Bill, you're on a wild-goose chase here, let me tell you. This talk about Poker Pete and a diamond necklace is too silly for anything."

"You intend to persist in that?" he said, rising.

"Certainly, I don't know what you're talking about."

He again began to search the room, but kept a close watch on her, for he felt that a woman who could lie in that extraordinary manner would be equal to shooting him in the back.

As before, his search was without success.

He thumped the floor, and was convinced that there was a cellar under it, but could find no door. The walls seemed solid, yet had in places a hollow sound.

Frank Powell had come to the outer door and was looking in; interested beyond measure in this singular situation, for he had heard a good deal of the talk between Buffalo Bill and the girl. As he stood thus looking into the room where the girl sat, and the scout was proceeding with his futile search, a yell came from the lips of Nick Nomad, and his long rifle roared.

"The skeleton!" he yelled.

Powell jumped back from the door, and, with a run, Buffalo Bill leaped out of the house after him.

Nomad was ramming a bullet down his long rifle, while his lips were working.

"Thar he goes!" he shouted. "I missed him slick as a whistle."

Some yards away, indistinctly seen in the moonlight, and half concealed by the whipping bushes through which he was speeding, they beheld a running form. It seemed to be a skeleton racing away in the moonlight.

Buffalo Bill drew his revolver and shot at it, and Powell did the same.

It seemed to drop to the earth, and they ran toward the spot where it had seemed to fall, but when they got there they discovered nothing.

Some bushes were broken, these being small twigs, which appeared to have been smashed and torn in the "skeleton's" flight.

They ran on for some distance, but saw nothing more, nor did they hear anything, when they stopped to listen, except the puffing and excited advance of Nomad, who had reloaded his rifle and was running to join them.

"Got away, did he?" roared the old man. "Waal, thet beats thet Jews! Fust time I ever missed anything I shot at, when it war thet close ter me. Makes me think 't thet thing war shore enough a skeleton. By jacks, it come so suddent thet it—"

"Where did it come from?" asked the scout.

"That's what I don't know, Buffler. Fust I seen of it ther thing war close up by the walls. I jumped toward it, for it war runnin' when my eyes lit on it, and then I yelled and shot at it. An' then ther thing fa'rly flew. I never seen a deer run faster. Skeletons air flyers, when it comes ter runnin'."

He tried to laugh, but there was no hilarity in the effort.

"He was in the cellar," said the scout, "and it was Poker Pete. Well, he got away this time."

"Waugh!"

Another yell rose from the old man's lips. The skeleton had reappeared in sight, some distance away, yet to be seen in the moonlight, and was now mounted, thus being again the Skeleton Horseman.

"Waugh! Thar he goes ag'in!"

Again the old rifle roared its contents, but the skeleton horseman dashed on, and was soon out of sight.

Nomad was nonplused and chagrined.

"Buffler," he said, "it's about time fer ther ole man ter hunt up some graveyard an' crawl inter it, when he gets so's he can't do no better shootin' than thet."

"You were excited, and that made your hand shaky."

"And this moonlight is very deceptive," added Powell. "It would have been a miracle if you had hit him."

CHAPTER X.

FOLLOWING THE SKELETON HORSEMAN.

They returned to the cabin of Dakota Dan, when it was seen that the skeleton horseman had escaped. There they found Dakota Dan's daughter. She stood in the door, looking out.

During their absence she had changed her clothing, being dressed now in a sort of border costume that was very becoming.

"Well, did you catch him?" she asked.

"We expect to catch him now that we know who he is," said Buffalo Bill.

"I didn't get to see him," she remarked carelessly; "so I'll ask who he is?"

"Ther skeleton horseman!" burst out Nomad.

"Indeed!" she cried. "That's strange."

"Not so strange as you claim," remarked Buffalo Bill.

They did not go into the cabin again. Nothing that Dakota Dan's daughter might say could be believed, and Buffalo Bill had already made a thorough examination of the interior.

But they inspected the outer walls of the cabin, trying to find the place where they were sure Poker Pete had emerged after changing back into the skeleton horseman.

They were baffled, as before. The door, if there was one, could not be found.

The girl stood in the cabin door, laughing at them, as they gave up their search and retreated.

"You've been very entertaining," she said mockingly. "Come again, some time."

"Buffler," remarked Nomad, when they were beyond her hearing, "ef thet's Dakoty Dan's daughter she's hed an eddication sense last time I seen him. I reck'lects, though, thet he said he war goin' ter send her off ter school some'eres, I disremember whar. But she's shore got a peppery tongue, and knows how ter sling words. But,

then, Dakota was hisself allus a handsome talker. He could make ye see white when you war dead shore it war black thet you ware lookin' at. Mebbe it's his daughter, arter all."

The three friends did not go far; only far enough to be beyond sight of the girl at the cabin.

"We know where that horseman struck out on horse-back," remarked the scout, "and there we'll strike his trail as soon as it's light enough, and follow it. In my opinion, it will lead straight back to Rocket City."

They camped there, not far from Dakota Dan's cabin, hoping that old Dakota Dan would return by morning. But when day came, Dakota Dan still absented himself.

They beheld a curl of smoke over the cabin, showing that the girl had started a fire.

As soon as it was light enough to do good trailing, the three friends made a search for the trail of the skeleton horseman, at the point where he had appeared in the moonlight. They located it, and they set out on it, finding that it led at first in long leaps straight away from the cabin. But it did not turn back toward the trail which would lead the rider in the direction of Rocket City.

"By ther jumpin' horned frogs o' Texas, I'm comin' back ter my 'riginal opinion!" said old Nomad at length. "I helt at fust, yer reck'lect, thet ther skeleton horseman war Teton John; and hyar, unless I'm too bug-eyed ter see straight, this trail is leadin' toward ther Teton village, on ther Squirrel Fork o' ther Fryingpan River. Ef it ain't, you fellers tell me whar it air leadin'."

The others had already noticed that the trail held in that general direction.

"Now, if ther skeleton aire goin' ter thet village, he ain't Poker Pete."

"But Poker Pete robbed the stage, for he had that diamond necklace," argued Powell. "He escaped from that cabin; he was in the cabin, for he saw him, and he had the necklace, for we saw that."

"Jes' because arguments kin be skeered up ter make it seem thet on certain occasions two and two makes five, ain't no shore reason that two an' two ever did make five, is it?" was the old man's answer. "This hyar trail is headin' fer thet Teton village, and I'm bettin' gold dollars ag'inst bullets thet Poker Pete wouldn't never hike in thet direction."

"We'll not accept your bet," said Buffalo Bill; "we'll simply follow this trail and see."

It was not so easy to follow, farther on, where there was much rough ledgy country and a slope of flinty hills. Yet they clung to it, losing a great deal of valuable time.

For that reason, though they had held to the trail, and the distance was not great enough to justify the amount of time spent in traversing it, darkness came as they approached the village on the Squirrel Fork of the river which bore the name of that cooking utensil dear to the heart of a borderman, the Fryingpan.

Yet the trail, once it had been picked up after leaving the flinty hills, had continued straight to the Teton village.

They had argued over the question, if it were possible that the skeleton horseman's trail had been lost in those hills and another trail picked up instead; yet that argument impugned their ability as trailers. They could not believe that the trail which led to the village was not the one they had followed away from Dakota Dan's cabin.

CHAPTER XI.

IN THE TETON VILLAGE.

They did not try to enter the village immediately. Instead, they camped on the stream some distance below, concealing themselves in the willows, and there they cooked their supper, using dry twigs, and screening their fire, and discussed the mystery in which they seemed to have become entangled.

There was a booming of drums in the village before Buffalo Bill set out alone to enter it.

He did not know what sort of reception he would get if he went in boldly.

If Teton John was the skeleton horseman, and he was in the village, the appearance of Buffalo Bill there would indicate to him his probable arrest, and trouble for the bold scout could be expected at the hands of Teton John's friends.

The first question to be settled was whether Teton John was in the village.

The booming of drums was an ominous thing, it seemed to the experienced scout and his friends, for it indicated the "mixing" of "war medicine." In other words, it showed that something had occurred to arouse the anger of the Teton Sioux and incline them to break out on the war trail.

The drum-booming helped the scout in a way, for it pointed out to him the council lodge, where, it was pretty certain, the chiefs and principal warriors were now assembled.

The village was full of snarling dogs, and that made his advance difficult. Few men could have invaded the village without discovery. Yet the scout made his way up to the rear of the council lodge, and stood there listening.

The moon had not yet risen, but would be up soon, and he was anxious to learn what he could and be away before the moonlight came to expose him.

A group of gossiping squaws came close up to the lodge. He heard them speak the name of "Squirrel Killer," which, he had learned, was the Indian name of Teton John.

A little later, when the dancing and the drum-beating ceased, some one began to speak, and the scout knew from what was said that he was hearing the voice of Teton John, for the speaker spoke of himself as "Squirrel Killer."

"In the village of the white men I was shot at yesterday," said Teton John, in a tone of anger. "The white men sought my life; they tried to shoot me down in the street. They are swearing that they will kill all the Teton dogs, and they are getting ready to move on the Teton village. I was followed to this place, for I am sure I saw white men riding after me across the prairies."

His voice rose, and his excitement seemed to increase. He appealed to the Tetons for protection, and begged them to be prepared for the assaulting white men, prophesying that if they did not rise and strike first, the white men would come like a destroying whirlwind and scatter the Teton Sioux, slaying them and their wives and children.

"The fellow is drunk," thought the scout.

He was not so considered, apparently, by the Sioux; yet they were not disposed to accept all his statements without some questioning.

One chief rose and began to query him.

"Is not the Squirrel Killer himself almost a white man?" said this chief. "Does he not stay with the white men more than he does with the people of his mother, the Teton Sioux? Does he not, when with the white men, wear the white men's clothing, and talk only the white man's tongue? And was he not sent away to the white man's school, where they take Indian children and put false hearts into them, and make them no better than squaws? Is not the Squirrel Killer afraid of his shadow?"

The answer of Teton John to this was hardly begun, when a wolfish dog made a snarling dash on the scout, assaulting him so viciously that he was prevented from running, for he had to stand and defend himself.

The dog was joined by others; and then the lodge skin seemed to break open in front of him, and he reeled backward, fighting the dogs, with the lodgeful of warriors dashing at him.

Escape was impossible. The scout was unwilling to slay any of the Indians, for that would have made his position a serious one if captured; and, because he thus would not lay about him in deadly fight, he was caught and hurled to the ground, a number of braves surrounding him and falling on him.

A wild whoop announced his capture and the discovery of his identity. He was dragged into the council lodge, and the fire in the center of the lodge was stirred up, so that its light flamed in his face.

Then he saw Teton John, wearing a blanket, and with paint on his face, and the other Indians also painted. More than that, and the thing which particularly drew his attention now, Teton John's body and limbs were striped with white paint, in the representation of a skeleton. The arms and legs had a black background under the white lines, thus bringing the skeleton stripes out with startling distinctness.

"This is one of the men who followed me from the village of the white men," said Teton John, "and it shows that others are near. It proves my words—that the whites are ready to march on the Teton village. You would not believe me. There is the proof!"

He spoke in the Teton tongue, with dramatic Indian gestures, but the scout understood him.

"It is false," said Buffalo Bill, speaking to the excited Tetons. "What he says is false. The white men are not ready to march against the Teton Sioux. They are at peace with the Tetons."

"Is not the tongue of the Long Hair always crooked?" said Teton John, with attempted Indian scorn. "His cowardly heart is full of lies!"

"A friend of mine sought to help you, when you were in danger, Teton John," said Cody.

"And followed me here!" Teton John retorted. "He is out there now; and behind him, coming from the town, are the white men who are to attack this village before morning."

He spoke so that the chiefs and warriors would understand him.

"Hear me, chiefs and warriors of the Teton Sioux!" said Buffalo Bill.

He had thrust aside the hands that had held him, and now stood erect, facing the startled and angry warriors, many of whom had weapons in their hands.

"There stands the man who must be known by reputation, even to you, as the Skeleton Horseman! Last night

he attacked the stage on the Fryingpan Trail, killed the driver, and robbed the people in the stage!"

Teton John drew a knife and sprang at him, but a chief caught the half-blood and threw him back.

"It's a lie!" yelled the half-blood. "I will cut out his white heart for this lie!"

"Listen to me," said the scout. "That man is as much white man as he is Teton. It is his cowardly white blood that has turned him into a robber of the stages, not the noble blood of the Sioux people, who are not murderers and robbers. When the Tetons fight, they fight boldly, not cowardly; and, when they take anything, it is something taken from their foes as the spoils of battle. See the skeleton stripes which he wears on his body even here. Striped to look in the darkness like a skeleton, he attacks the lonely stages, and disgraces the Indian blood he bears in his veins. I came here with two friends, following his trail. We did not know but his cowardice had made him pass on round the village, lest you should see the deceit and the murder in his heart; and, to know if this were so or not, I came up to this lodge, where I heard the drums booming. Then I heard the crooked tongue of Teton John, whom you call the Squirrel Killer. I might have made myself known to you then, but the dogs attacked me."

Buffalo Bill's bold accusation against Teton John had created a tremendous sensation.

Yet the stealthy manner in which he had crept into the village, with his startling capture and sudden introduction into the council lodge, weakened his case.

Teton John saw this.

He saw the doubtful, scowling faces of the Teton Sioux, and that, while some of the Indians were disposed to think well of the statements of Long Hair, others believed the scout to be lying.

Besides, though Teton John had enemies in the village, or at least certain braves were there who disliked him because he was half white, his accuser, Buffalo Bill, was entirely white, and that was against him.

Teton John began a vicious-tongue assault on Buffalo Bill, denying his story, and declaring that the scout was but a spy of the white men, who were advancing from the town to the attack of the place, and that he ought to be slain instantly, and without mercy.

Though for some time they had "buried the hatchet," and were at peace with the whites, and had even sent a peace delegation of braves to visit the Great Father at Washington, their fingers itched now to clutch the scalping knife and run it through the hair of the white man who stood before them.

Buffalo Bill saw that he had put himself in a position of imminent danger, as he heard the railing words of Teton John, and saw the black looks cast on him by the Teton chiefs and warriors.

CHAPTER XII.

WHITE BEAVER'S STRATEGY.

The wild Indian yell which announced the capture of Buffalo Bill was heard clearly by his two friends, Frank Powell and old Nick Nomad. They had heard, likewise, the loud barking of dogs, followed now by the noisy outcry of squaws and children, the whole making an unpleasantly suggestive outcry.

Powell and the old borderman started to their feet, clutching their weapons.

"Cody's in trouble!"

"Captured, by ginger! It's Samson, ag'in, in ther hands o' ther Philistines; and, if thar ain't another case o' hair-cut right quick, I aint' no Jeremiar, ther prophet!"

He drew his long rifle forward, and seemed about to run in the direction of the noise.

Frank Powell's voice stayed him.

"If you'll remain here with the horses, Nomad, and have them ready for use, I'll try to slip into the village, and see just how matters stand."

"And git captured yerself!" the old man protested.

Powell stepped to his saddle, and took from it two small, round objects, each about half the size of an orange, and also took some extra revolver cartridges.

"I've told you about these," he said, coming back, "and I'm sure I can stop any rush they may make with one of them. I think I'd better try to get in. Cody doubtless needs help, and, if I can get out of there with him, there'll be a lively call for our horses."

"If ye give ther cry of ther wild cat, Powell, I'll know I'm ter come, too, and I'll come b'ilin'—me an' ole Nebuchadnezzar."

"All right," Powell assented.

Powell vanished in the darkness toward the village, and was soon swallowed from sight.

The moon had not yet risen, though faint harbingers of its ascent were visible on the horizon. Its light would soon be flooding the landscape.

When Powell got close up to the lodges, he found that progress was not easy. A number of braves had stationed themselves at various point on the village borders, as guards. But the thing that made White Beaver the most fearful was that the snarling Indian dogs were racing here and there through the village.

To get through without being seen or scented by them would, he knew, be difficult.

The guard closest to him was staring straight at him, it seemed to Powell. To avoid this guard, he lay flat on the ground, and began a sidewise crawling movement, thus entering the village on his stomach, like a lizard.

Once inside, he took concealment behind one of the lodges. Fortunate for him it was that the moon had not yet risen. The shadow of the lodge made the darkness intense, and he stood there in safety, hearing talk within the lodge, and also hearing the babble of braves in and around the council lodge, some distance farther on.

The excitement at the council house caused the Indians—they were women and children—to vacate the lodge behind which Powell had taken shelter.

He heard them leave the lodge, and heard them as they hastened on.

He dropped again to the ground, lifted the edge of the lodge tent, and, crawling inside, searched about until his hands fell on an Indian blanket. He got out of the lodge with this, and, with it wrapped about him, and hooded over his head, giving him the appearance of an Indian, he began again his courageous and perilous advance.

Thus Frank Powell reached the rear of the council lodge. Standing there a few moments, he was able to hear enough of what was said—for he understood the Teton dialect—to give him a fair idea of the condition of things.

Buffalo Bill was inside the lodge, and was being accused by Teton John, who had resumed his railing accusations, and was begging the braves to strike Buffalo Bill down.

"What has the Long Hair to say?" Powell heard a chief demand.

"That it is a lie! That the Squirrel Killer speaks with a tongue so crooked that the wriggling serpent crawling on the ground is straight compared with it!"

There was a sudden movement, and a cry of rage, as Teton John drew a knife, and would have leaped on Buffalo Bill if a chief had not again interposed.

Powell stepped quickly round the lodge, until he came to the entrance. Nothing but the utmost boldness could suffice here, he saw. Therefore, he bravely swept the lodge flap aside, and stepped boldly within, seen and clamored at by the women who were hovering at the opening, or near it.

Teton John stepped back, with knife clutched, when he beheld this figure in the entrance, and the chiefs and braves stared angrily at the intruder.

It had been the hope of White Beaver that he might by persuasion secure the release of Buffalo Bill.

It required but a glance into the fire-lighted faces of the Tetons grouped in that council lodge to tell him that by attempting persuasion he jeopardized not only Buffalo Bill, but himself.

It was only surprise and fear that now prevented Teton John from dashing on Powell with the knife.

So, while Teton John hesitated, and the other Indians hesitated with him, White Beaver took in the situation. He lifted his hand. It held one of the small, round objects already referred to as having been taken from his saddle pouch.

"Jump!" he shouted.

Buffalo Bill, still unbound, understood, even before the command came, what his friend meant to attempt.

He leaped for the lodge entrance, and, as he did so, the round object shot from White Beaver's hand, striking the ground behind Buffalo Bill with considerable force. Instantly there was a blinding explosion, the Indians falling back before it, some of them in a panic hurling themselves against the lodge skins, while others rolled over in excitement and terror on the floor.

As soon as he hurled the bomb—for, in effect, the thing was a bomb, though not deadly—Frank Powell turned about, and ran with his friend as fast as he could, dodging in behind the nearest lodges.

The bomb had not scattered deadly missiles in the council lodge, but with that flash and roar it had emitted sickening and stifling fumes, which so filled the tent that existence in it seemed to be unbearable.

The smarting and choking fumes filled throat, eyes, and mouth, and burned the lips, and caused the Indians to indulge in violent sneezings and coughings.

Those who had fallen to the ground near the lodge walls crawled with wild haste under the walls, and so burrowed to the outside.

Those near the entrance almost fell backward out of it.

The women and children hovering near the council lodge had also been thrown into a panic of fear.

It did not take the scout and Powell long to reach the edge of the village. The moon was rising, and its light began to touch the tops of the tepees, as already it had lighted the tops of the near-by hills. Then they

heard a bellowing voice, and in the faint light they saw before them Nick Nomad, mounted on Nebuchadnezzar, and leading the two other horses.

Never was sight more welcome, for the incensed Tetons were getting their courage again, were rallying, and some of the boldest had already begun a pursuit, led by Teton John, who felt that it would not do to let these white men escape from the place.

Buffalo Bill had boldly charged him with being the skeleton horseman.

He knew what such a charge, made by such a man, meant for him.

If the scout got away now, he would return with a force strong enough to arrest him on the charges of being the road agent who had masqueraded as the skeleton rider; and that would mean, if the charge could be sustained against him, that Teton John would be sent to the penitentiary or hanged.

Incensed and driven by fear, Teton John used his utmost eloquence and all his persuasive powers to convince the Tetons that pursuit must be begun and pushed at once.

The entrance of Buffalo Bill with stealth into the village, and the explosion of that bomb in the very council lodge itself, were things the Tetons could not forgive nor overlook.

They believed that the bomb, though it had slain no one, had been of a deadly character, reasoning that it was sheer luck which had saved them from death when it exploded.

"There they go! Get ponies! Get ponies! Do not let them escape!"

So howled Teton John, in the Teton tongue, as he led the chase and urged other warriors to bring up the Indian ponies that were corralled by the stream.

As for our friends, when they saw Nomad with the horses, they shouted to him, and ran at top speed.

"Hyar we aire!" said Nomad, riding to meet them.

He turned the horses about, and, as the fugitives came up, the horses being, as it were, broadsides on, they sprang straight into the saddles.

"Waugh!" Nomad bellowed. "Ef we wants ter keep our topknots in position, and good and healthy, I reckons we're elected ter make about the liveliest hustle on record!"

And this "lively hustle" they began at once to make.

CHAPTER XIII.

CORRALLED BY REDSKINS.

In order to throw the Tetons off the scent, Buffalo Bill and his companions did not head straight back toward the cabin of Dakota Dan, but journeyed in a big semi-circle, coming, finally, back to the trail that would take them in the course desired, which was the general course toward Rocket City.

But the Tetons, led by Teton John, had shrewdly guessed that this was the very thing the fugitives would do.

Hence, when the scout and his friends swung in toward the trail, they came near falling into an ambushade, and would have done so, probably, but for the sagacity of old Nebuchadnezzar.

One of the things Nebuchadnezzar feared was an In-

dian. That was, doubtless, because his master had fought Indians, and then been chased by them so often.

As the trail was approached, Nebuchadnezzar scented the Indians lying in ambush, and showed uneasiness.

"Whoa, ye ole fool!" Nomad grumbled at first. "What in the tarnation's got inter ye?"

Then Nomad sensed the reason for the queer actions of his old horse. He drew rein.

"Buffer," he said, almost in a whisper, "thar's Injuns ahead of us, shore as shootin'! This hyar ole beast never cuts up sich didos 'less he smells the greasy hides of Injuns!"

All stopped.

Nebuchadnezzar cocked his ears forward, and stared, as if trying to look across the intervening distance. The wind was straight from the ambuscading Indians to him, so that their scent came to him hot and strong. He trembled.

"When ole Nebby talks English as plain as that, Buffer, this ole coon takes a back track!" whispered Nomad. "We cert'in walks plum inter a trap ef we goes erhead!"

Buffalo Bill was acquainted with the "sense" of the old horse. He had campaigned and hunted Indians with Nomad more than once, and had watched the peculiar actions of Nebuchadnezzar at such times.

"Yes, Indians," he said.

But he was surprised. He had not thought the Tetons would be there.

"They cut across the country, instead of following us."

"Which shows how cute they aire, Buffer!"

"It shows that Teton John, who is leading them, is using the white man's half of his brain, instead of merely Indian cunning. We'll back track, and again circle."

They started to do this, but some of the Indians, who had been stationed out in advance of the ambushade, gave warning of this by wolf cries, and the whole Teton body came dashing on horses for the purpose of cutting them off.

A lively race followed.

Buffalo Bill and his companions succeeded in getting into the trail heading toward Rocket City, but in doing so they were hard pressed; and, when they struck the trail, and had a straight course before them, the Indian pursuers were thundering at their heels, and not far in the rear.

As the chase continued, the Tetons became strung out, the poorer ponies falling behind.

But there was a crowd of nearly twenty, led by Teton John himself, who were mounted on the best of the Teton ponies, and these crowded the fugitives hard.

Buffalo Bill and his companions did not want to stop and fight these Tetons. Some of the Tetons would be killed, and they might have losses or wounds themselves; and the scout did not wish to do anything to foment trouble between the whites and the Teton Sioux, which certainly would follow if any of the Tetons were slain. He wanted to remain on the side of law and order, and let others start trouble, if it had to be started.

Hence he led the flight, urging his well-trained horse to its best gait.

It was interesting to watch old Nebuchadnezzar.

Ordinarily, the old beast seemed to be half asleep, and he was at all times apparently a rack of bones, and without speed.

But one of the peculiar things about old Nebuchadnezzar

was that, when his master called on him to his best, there were not many horses in the Western country that could beat him. His speed and wind had more than once saved the life of his master in a race with Indians.

Frank Powell's horse proved the slowest and poorest.

The distance to the vicinity of Dakota Dan's cabin, which it had taken the scout and his friends a whole day to cover by slow trailing, they passed over now in less than three hours, with the pursuing Tetons right behind them, yelling now and then, and firing their rifles.

The bright moonlight made the prairies almost as light as day.

It was, indeed, a rare race. But now Powell's horse, that had some time back showed signs of failing, was panting heavily, and going lame. It was abandoned, and Powell mounted behind Buffalo Bill.

The scout's horse bore the double burden courageously for a time. Yet it was overburdened, and the length of the race and this double burden began to tell on it. Even old Nebuchadnezzar, hardened beast that he was, began to show signs of distress.

"We'll have to make a stand," said Buffalo Bill. "Otherwise, we'll find ourselves afoot, and not able to pick our ground. Here's a rocky slope, with good fighting ground. We'll stop here."

They dismounted hurriedly, driving the panting horses back behind them down another slope, and then choosing a standing place sheltered by rocks, with a big, wide-spreading tree at their backs, they fired into the Tetons, to let them know they were at bay, and ready to fight now to the finish.

When they discovered this, the Tetons fell back, and, dismounting, advanced on foot, and ringed the white men in.

Yet they kept well out of sight, but fired persistently at the rocks where the white men had sought refuge.

"They're waiting for daylight," said Powell, "and then they'll try to get our hair. I wonder if one of us couldn't slip through and go for help?"

CHAPTER XIV.

DAKOTA DAN TO THE RESCUE.

Scarcely were the words out of Powell's mouth when there sounded a queer tapping behind them, apparently coming from the heart of the tree.

Nomad and the others stared at the tree.

"By all ther birds thet ever flew, it sounds like a big woodpecker!" said Nomad.

Then, to their astonishment, a man's head appeared in a hole in the tree not far above them, the head distinctly visible in the moonlight.

"Waugh!" cried Nomad, in a shrill whisper. "Dakoty Dan, er I'm a grasshopper-eatin' Piute!"

It was Dakota Dan, Nomad's old friend and trapping acquaintance.

"Up here!" whispered the head. "Here's a hole in ther tree, whar all o' ye kin hide. Scratch up hyar, an' fall inter it quick's ye kin, fer ther durn reds aire slippin' round behint ther ridge, and will be atop o' ye 'most 'fore ye know it!"

A hand appeared, and was wiggled, to add emphasis to the words.

"Dakoty," said Nomad, "how in thunderation did you git in thar yerself? Ye been hidin' in thar all this while?"

The owner of the head grinned, as he said:

"Nick, that aint' neither hyar ner thar; but, ef you don't stir yer stumps lively, you'll quit stirrin' 'em ferevermore on this hyar earth! I'm tellin' ye!"

"But ther hosses?"

"The Injuns is shore ter git 'em. You can't help it. Slide up hyar, same as if you war a b'ar hustlin' fer a hole and safety. I'm warnin' ye!"

Buffalo Bill knew something of Dakota Dan, and knew this warning would not be given if it was not needed; and he was ready to act on it at once, while Nomad, in his great surprise, was still endeavoring to ask questions.

"Fling up yer rifle!" commanded Dakota Dan.

The scout thrust up the muzzle of his; and then Dakota Dan began to pull on it, to hoist him.

"Now, up wi' ye, and quick erbout it!"

Buffalo Bill began to climb the tree.

When he gained the hole, he found it large enough to admit his body. It was a dark hole—so dark that he could see only that speaking head and the waving arm.

"Drap down insidè," whispered the head, "and take yer weepin with ye. Let all holts go, and tumble; you'll fetch up, all right."

The scout obeyed, falling a distance of six or eight feet, as much as the distance from the hole to the ground, and found himself on a heap of rotten wood that made a soft bed.

"Stand back outer the way!" came the voice above him.

Powell had thrust up his gun, and was being assisted to scale the tree by Dakota Dan.

He came tumbling down by Buffalo Bill, who had burrowed back to give him room.

A rifle cracked not far off, and Nomad was heard to give a grunt of surprise. Then he came tumbling down inside of the tree.

"Waugh!" he sputtered, digging rotten wood out of his hair and beard, for he had fallen awkwardly. "Some Injun skunk shot at me jes' as I reached ther hole, and ther bullet went slam inter ther wood at ther side o' my head. My ear's ringing yit frum the sound of it. I reckon he seen me, and tried to git me, same as if I war a climbin' ole he b'ar."

Then, outside, were heard wild yells, and the trampling of moccasined feet on the rocks.

The Tetons had made their circle round the ridge, and when they began to close their net they had discovered that the birds had flown.

"Furder down," said Dakota Dan. "Don't be afeared ter try it. You'll find a slidin' incline, like a beaver-slide, and it will take ye to whar you'll be safe as muskrats in wintertime."

To show that this was so, he squirmed past the puzzled and huddled group, and led the way, in the dense darkness, guiding by his voice alone.

The hollow, which seemed the hollow of the tree, went on soon in almost a horizontal direction several feet underground.

Then Dakota Dan scratched a flint on a piece of steel, and struck sparks into some punky wood, and soon had a little fire going, which he fed to a greased wick.

The light of a candle flamed forth.

"Why didn't you ask for a match?" said the scout.

He looked about. Here was a sandstone cave, ap-

parently, of such small size that it seemed but an enlargement of the hole they had come through.

This hole continued on into the darkness.

The cave was damp, and had an earthy smell, and some of the rotten wood from the hollow tree had found its way down into it.

Dakota Dan had dropped to a seat on a slab of sandstone.

He held the candle, and flashed its light on the damp walls.

"Nick," he said, "and Buffler, and t'others, this hyar is a find thet's helped me twict; once when wolves rounded me up hyar, and another time when Injuns chased me. I diskivered ther hole in ther tree by accident, and this cave ther same way, by chasin' a b'ar inter it, and watchin' outside fer ther critter ter come out. He never did come out by ther way he went in; and, when I investergated, this hyar is what I found. I've kept it a secret, ter be used only in case o' need. I cal'lated this hyar was a clear case o' need."

Nomad was now wringing the hand of his old trapping friend.

Dakoty, how'd yer git in hyar yerself?" he asked.

The Tetons were howling on the rocks above, and could be heard plainly, and now was heard another sound—wood was being piled against the tree.

Dakota Dan smiled in a queer way.

"I war afeared o' it; they're goin' ter burn ther ole tree down, thinkin' that you fellers aire in it, and they'll git ye. When Injuns gits wild, they're wilder'n wild cats; and they're good and wild ter-night. Some time, Nick, ye kin tell me what started up 'em so suddent, huntin' fer yer ha'r. We ain't got time now. And now I'll answer yer question by showin' all o' ye jes' how I got in hyar."

He led the way through the narrow, tunnelliike place that led on from this enlargement.

It was damp, and at times too contracted for comfort.

"It warn't a big b'ar I chased that time, er he'd never got through," Dakota Dan explained; "and hyar's whar he went out at. But I've stopped that up, and it's greased over now, so can't be seen frum ther outside."

He flashed the light of the candle on some stones, which had originally been held in position by branches of trees heaped against them, but were now held by the compacted earth.

"Then I opened ther tunnel through thar by a little blastin'," he continued. "Jes' foller along."

They followed, and in a little while they came to another enlargement, and a solid stone wall.

In this wall was a door; and, when Dakota Dan had opened it, they found themselves in a small space, like a large closet room; and in there, with a lamp burning, sat Dakota Dan's pretty daughter.

CHAPTER XV.

MYSTERIES MIX UP.

The daughter of Dakota Dan smiled enigmatically upon Buffalo Bill and his friends.

"I think I'll go out and look round a bit," she said, speaking to Dakota Dan.

"I'd advise ag'inst it," he urged.

But she went out, slipping softly through a door, which, to the surprise of the newcomers, opened through what seemed the wall.

She had vanished, apparently, into a room.

"A part o' ther wall of my cabin," said Dakota Dan, explaining. "I fixed it back o' ther cabin hyar, in case o' need, connectin' it, fer ther same reason, wi' ther tunnel runnin' ter the holler tree. It's sometimes wise ter have a secret back way ter git outer yer house in a country like this."

Buffalo Bill fancied that he knew now where Poker Pete had been when the cabin was being searched for him.

The room through which the girl had passed had closed softly behind her.

"Makes me narvous ter have her take sech resks," said Dakota Dan uneasily.

"Why did she go?" asked the scout.

"Ter see about her hoss. She's got a handsome young mare in ther shed behind ther cabin. Thar's a door goes ter ther shed frum the main room o' ther cabin, but it's takin' resks. Better let ther reds git ther mare than ter run needless resk."

They thanked Dakota Dan now for what he had done for them; and, naturally, asked him questions concerning some of the secrets he had opened up for their benefit.

"I been hyar a good many years," he explained, "and in danger frum reds and outlaws. And, when a man lives whar ther is danger, he ginerally manages to prepare fer it. And that's all there is o' this. I fixed up this house so's I could git inter hidin' quick when thar war need of it.

"That ole tree which we come frum war, yer might say, my furdest back door. Too bad that ther pesky Tetons aire burnin' it! I'll have ter change my back entrance now."

"We can go into your cabin from here?" asked Powell.

"Yes; but I thought mebbe we'd best wait a bit. Maud will be comin' back d'reckly."

Maud did not return as soon as her father expected.

For this reason, Dakota Dan opened the door through which she had disappeared from the closet space, and all entered the main room of the cabin, hearkening lest Indians should be outside.

Buffalo Bill and his companions were anxious to question Dakota Dan concerning the mysteries they had noted in the actions and words of his daughter, yet they hesitated, and postponed it.

At first the yells of the Indians who were surrounding the burning tree came to them quite plainly.

They sat alone in the darkness of the cabin, listening to these sounds.

"It will be a good thing, if they thinks that all o' ye war burnt up in that tree," said Dakota Dan. "If they thinks that, they won't look no fuder."

Moccasins were heard on the grass by the door, followed by a knock, and then the voice of Teton John.

"Maud!" he called.

The only answer was a smothered curse from Dakota Dan.

"Maud!" Teton John repeated. "Don't be scared, and don't be silly. The Tetons have gone. I have sent them away. They did not intend to trouble the cabin, anyway. I wouldn't have let them do that. And they wouldn't trouble you."

Still no answer came from within.

"I think you're in there!"

Teton John's voice grew angry now, and he kicked on the door with his moccasined foot.

"Where is that door leading to the stable?" Buffalo Bill whispered to Dakota Dan.

Dakota Dan rose, caught the scout by the hand, and, with stealthy steps, led him to a corner of the room.

"Right hyar. I s'pose you're goin' ter try ter ketch him? Only way ter do is ter shoot him, likely, and I shan't hold it agin' ye if ye do. When ther likes of all sech as him aire underground, the better fer everybody."

He pressed against the wall in a peculiar way, and a door swung open, a hidden door, which the scout's search of the cabin had failed to reveal.

"Look out fer yerself, and look round fer Maud. I'm follerin' ye in jes' a minute. I'll parley with ther devil at ther front door, and that will let ye up behind him as he's listenin' ter me. Look out fer Maud!"

Buffalo Bill did not have time to digest the meaning of that final warning.

To his surprise and delight, when he had passed through a short tunnel and opened there a door, he found himself in a stable, where a handsome horse stood, bridled and saddled. It was the girl's riding animal, yet it bore a man's saddle, and at the saddlebow was coiled a lasso.

But the girl was not there.

The light was not good, and the scout did not stop to inspect this horse. He wanted to capture Teton John while Dakota Dan held the rascal in front of the door by talk.

But, as the scout left the stable, he heard a scuffle, followed by running feet, and then, before he could get round the house, an angry command to stop came, in the voice of Teton John, followed by a scream, a shot, and the heavy fall of a body.

Then Buffalo Bill saw Maud Robinson running wildly away from the house, pursued by a skeleton-striped figure.

This skeleton figure caught up the screaming girl, and, climbing with her in his arms to a saddled horse, he rode away with her, the girl falling limp in his arms as he thus rode off.

The scout's revolver had been lifted more than once in the few moments it had taken to enact this, but always it was lowered again, for he could not take the risk of shooting the girl.

But Buffalo Bill was not alone in seeing this startling tragedy.

Dakota Dan, together with Powell and Nomad, had come leaping out of the cabin by the front door, drawn by the girl's scream and the shot.

If this had really been a trick of Teton John and the Sioux to draw forth the occupants of the cabin, it would have worked like a charm. A more clever trick could not have been devised for the purpose. But it was not a trick.

Buffalo Bill by this time had turned back to the stable. He reappeared almost instantly on the back of the horse he had seen tied there; and he set out in a wild gallop in pursuit of the skeleton rider.

In a little while the skeleton rider came into view, holding the girl, who lay in his arms in a limp heap.

He seemed to be hesitating and uncertain as to the course he ought to take, and Buffalo Bill became aware of the fact that off on the right two Indians were running, as if to intercept the mysterious horseman.

They fired at him now, the flashes of their guns reveal-

ing their head feathers and painted faces, showing that they were Teton Sioux.

The scout paid scant attention to these Indians. He merely wondered if the remainder of the Teton force that had followed Teton John was over there.

Then he settled down in a stern pursuit of the skeleton horseman.

The girl was apparently being carried away against her will.

This was the time, the scout hoped, that he would be able to learn who was this skeleton rider.

He removed the lasso from its coil and held it in his hand for a cast, when he saw that he was overtaking the stranger rider.

The latter glanced back, and then urged his horse to greater speed. But his horse was not as fast as the mare the scout rode, and it was carrying double.

The scout drew nearer and nearer.

The man turned, and, as his skeleton arm swung up, a revolver flashed. The bullet sang past the scout's cheek.

He did not draw rein, nor stop, but merely bent forward in the saddle, with the lasso held in readiness.

As if in terror, the skeleton rider drove now straight ahead.

The scout decreased the distance. The country was now open, and the pace of the horses was tremendous.

When he was close enough for a cast, the whirling noose shot from the hand of Buffalo Bill like a bolt of lightning, and settled over the head of the masked mystery.

It was the scout's intention to keep his horse going, so that the man should not be jerked violently out of the saddle, and imperil by that the life of the girl.

But, as the noose settled down round the man's neck, the horse he rode stumbled, so that the effect was the same as if the scout's animal had stopped suddenly and pulled the man out of his saddle.

He was jerked to the ground, and went rolling over and over heavily, the girl sliding out of his arms and striking the ground, with a scream.

Buffalo Bill drew rein, and jumped down, running first to the girl's assistance.

As he did so, a revolver shot tore through his coat, and he found that the shot had been fired by the skeleton rider, who had risen and was pulling on him again.

A sidewise jump saved the scout from the second bullet, and then he was on the skeleton horseman, and choking him savagely.

He did not desist until he had choked the fellow into insensibility.

By that time Powell, Dakota Dan, and Nick Nomad had appeared, running wildly.

The girl had staggered dizzily to her feet, and seemed about to fall, but was caught and supported in the arms of her father.

"Waal, ther devil's dead!" said Nick Nomad.

"No; I only choked him until he doesn't know anything," corrected the scout, referring to the man he had captured. "And now we'll see who the rascal is."

"I didn't mean him!" said Nomad. "I meant Teton John. That shot we heard at ther cabin killed him deader'n a door nail. I seen him layin' thar. And that's why this——"

Buffalo Bill tore the mask from the face of the skele-

ton rider, who lay unconscious on the ground before him.

The white bright moonlight shone down into the face of——

Poker Pete!

CHAPTER XVI.

CONCLUSION.

It was daylight, and our friends were in the cabin of Dakota Dan again.

Poker Pete had been desperately wounded by Dakota Dan, as he tried to escape, and had but a short while to live.

He lay on a blanket by the window that gave the most light, for he had begged for more light.

The girl stood by the window, weeping.

There had been explanations, many of them, yet all things were still not clear.

The body of Teton John, who had been killed by Poker Pete, lay on the grass outside, by the door.

So far, it was known that Teton John and Poker Pete had each sought the hand of Maud Robinson in marriage. Teton John had been scorned by the girl, because he was a half-blood, while Poker Pete had been forbidden the house by Dakota Dan, because he was a gambler, and, as Dakota Dan believed, a "bad man" generally.

But Poker Pete was handsome and debonair; he was a good talker and he had fascinated the girl, who, though she had been sent away by her father to be educated, still had the untaught heart of a child in matters of this kind.

Poker Pete had been paying her visits by stealth in the absence of her father.

This was why, it may be explained here, she had put out the light so quickly when that knock had been heard by her and by Poker Pete on the cabin door, for at first she had thought the one who knocked was her father, and that he had surprised her in a meeting with the forbidden lover.

Her after actions at that time had been to screen Poker Pete from the men who had really appeared at the cabin searching for him.

Poker Pete had been hidden by her in the secret closet, and while he was in there, and the three comrades were making their search, Teton John had appeared for an interview with her, not knowing any one was there, yet hoping to meet her. He had been fired on close by the cabin walls by Nomad, and the chase which led to the Teton village was then begun.

It was this "jealousy" existing between the two men which had caused Poker Pete to attack Teton John in the village. None of Poker Pete's bullets had struck Teton John at that time. He had merely stumbled and fallen, knocking himself senseless for an instant, and slightly and temporarily laming him, and that was all.

It was clear now that both Teton John and Poker Pete had been playing "skeleton horseman."

Teton John had begun it, striping himself with Indian paints, the suggestion having come to him at first from the skeleton lines he had several times drawn on himself for use in the Teton village dances.

Then Poker Pete had taken it up, using a skin-tight black suit, on which skeleton lines in white were painted. It had been an excellent device with which to frighten

the timid people who rode in the stages, and it made his own danger in the "holdups" less.

Another thing Buffalo Bill knew now was that Poker Pete was the "Prairie Bob" who had killed a sheriff and fled to this wild region.

But only pity was in the heart of the great scout, as he stood watching the girl sobbing by the window, and the young gambler and outlaw, whose life was ebbing away.

As he thus looked and pitied, a question from Dakota Dan brought a startling disclosure.

"What was yer name 'fore ye took up these hyar other names?" the old man was saying.

"A queer name—Anderson Sanderson. I never heard another like it, and that's why I dropped it; it was too easy to remember and too hard to forget."

Dakota Dan gave a convulsive start; the girl stared at Poker Pete, and then screamed.

"What!" said Dakota Dan. "Anderson Sanderson?"

"A queer name!" commented Poker Pete.

Dakota Dan's voice softened.

"Young feller, I fergives ye everything, and I hopes you fergives me. This hyar girl, which ye wanted ter marry, ain't my own daughter at all. I adopted her when her folks was dead. And she had a brother. Her name was then Violet Sanderson, and her brother, which we didn't know what had become of him, war named Anderson Sanderson. But—I hopes ye fergives me! I'm glad that you two didn't marry, fer 'twould have been a sin! I understands now why you two looks so much alike."

The girl had thrown herself, sobbing, on the bosom of the dying man.

Later still, the other mysterious things and circumstances were all cleared away.

Poker Pete had been the "Irma Rand" who had sold soap in the street. The "warning" contained on that soap wrapper had not been intended by him for the scout, but had been written by Maud Robinson, and intended by her for Poker Pete.

Yet Poker Pete, recognizing the scout, had deliberately set about to draw the scout out of the town on that lonely trail, and then had tried to ambush and assassinate him.

In selling soap on the street as a female street faker, Poker Pete was simply making good a wager with Maud Robinson, Dakota Dan's daughter, who had declared that he could not carry a thing like that through without detection. She had loaned him certain of her clothing in which to make the trial. No doubt, too, Poker Pete had been very willing to try it, for success meant a good deal of money with a small outlay.

A scar, long and white, was found on Poker Pete's arm, after his death; but over this scar was the white-striped sleeve of the "skeleton" skin-tight suit.

He had explained, in his dying moments, that he had not intended to come to the cabin that night, but had been out in his skeleton clothing to hold up a stage, when he had heard the Indian yells, and had ridden to investigate.

Believing the girl in danger from the Teton, he had come up to the cabin, and then, encountering her, he had sought to carry her off to safety, forgetting, in his anxiety, his skeleton clothing.

She had screamed at sight of him, and then had fainted,

for she did not know he was the "skeleton horseman," or one of them.

She had been scouting round to see what the Teton were doing, and at the time was returning to the house.

Finally, it may be said that the diamond necklace given to Dakota Dan's adopted daughter by Poker Pete was returned to the young lady from whom it had been taken.

Teton John was buried, with funeral rites, by the Teton Sioux.

But by that time their rage against Buffalo Bill and the white men had somewhat abated, for they had learned a good deal about Teton John's secret history and crimes.

For a long time afterward the singular story of the "Skeleton Horseman" was one of the wonder tales of that region.

THE END.

Next week there will appear a thrilling story, full of bright, snappy dialogue and exciting situations, entitled "Buffalo Bill and the Brazos Terror; or, The Lone Star Outlaws." Do not fail to get No. 86, which will be out May 2d, and read this wonderful narrative of Buffalo Bill's adventures.

WASHINGTON'S YOUNG SPY; Or, Outwitting General Howe.

By T. C. HARBAUGH.

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

Rufus Mactaw and Jacob Smock, two Tory spies, bring information concerning Washington's army in Westchester to British officers in New York. They receive thanks, but no money. Smock demands some, saying that he wishes to marry, but the sum that is offered to him is so small that he scorns it, and leaves the British officers in an ugly frame of mind.

Two other characters, of a very different stripe, are then introduced to the reader. They are both officers serving under Washington. One is Captain Pierce, commander of the Boys of Liberty, the other, Captain Frank Lowry, who is ordered by Washington to enter the British lines as a spy.

CHAPTER III.

FAIR DECEIVERS.

There was no more loyal officer attached to the king's service in North America than Colonel Socrates Fuller, of the Loyal Foot.

He was a handsome man of eight-and-twenty, finely proportioned and overzealous.

He had conceived the idea of recruiting from among the loyal inhabitants of New York and vicinity a regiment of men who would render King George efficient service, and his ranks were filling fast.

These men were Tories, and those who did not care to enlist when first called upon were never solicited again. Colonel Fuller wanted only those ready to take service under him, and he regarded a man who did not enlist as one lukewarm in the royal cause.

Moreover, the colonel was somewhat of a lady's man, as his appearance gave him entrée into the best society in the city, and he never forgot his allegiance to the king.

On the night following Frank Lowry's fateful commission from Washington, Colonel Fuller might have been

seen in a handsome parlor in the most aristocratic part of the city, in conversation with two young maidens, celebrated for their beauty and winsome manners all over the town.

"Pray, Colonel Fuller, how are you coming on with your regiment?" asked one of the damsels.

"Swimmingly, Mistress Kent. They are flocking to the king's standard, and I am having the best luck imaginable."

"Then you will soon be ready to take the field? I understand the regiment is to be known as the Loyal Foot."

"Yes; I think the name is very appropriate. We had the choice of two names—the Loyal Foot and the King's Own."

"Do you not think, Colonel Fuller, that the latter name would have suited best? Your king will own the regiment."

Colonel Fuller turned to the last speaker with a smile on his well-cut lips.

"Mistress Beverley," said he, "one would think from the tone of your voice that you are not just with us."

"I am, as you know, Colonel Fuller, from Boston, the hotbed of rebellion, as your people say," was the answer.

"I am, therefore, imbued with a love of liberty——"

"Come, Priscilla," broke in Mistress Kent, "I trust you will not start an argument by which we may become involved in disputatious controversy. You know the king's forces hold the city, which they won after some hot work over on Long Island, and now they have full and undisputed possession."

"True, Lucy, dear; but you must remember that the war is not over yet."

"I regret to say that it is not. We must needs lose some more brave fellows, for your rebel Washington is tenacious, and his rabble are hard fighters, but we hope the Loyal Foot will speedily make a change in affairs."

"Thank you, Mistress Lucy," bowed Colonel Fuller. "I promise you that the Loyal Foot will be felt just as soon as we get the opportunity. We must wait a few days longer, but the regiment is so near filled up that we hope to be ordered to the front by the beginning of next week."

"So soon?" cried Mistress Kent, who was a vivacious girl of seventeen. "I hope you will not see much hard fighting, for, I believe, these rebels will speedily run at sight of the new soldiers."

"I wish I could say as much," was the reply; "but I fear they will give us some trouble. Mistress Beverley, don't you really think that General Washington would best accept of the king's amnesty if he could obtain it now?"

"I do not think so," was the quick rejoinder. "Washington, you know, is fighting for liberty, and the king regards him as a rebel. They hang rebels in England, and should Washington now throw down his sword he would have to be dealt with under your royal statutes."

"Exactly!" cried Colonel Fuller. "There can be no pardon for such a man as Washington."

"Then, why do you speak of amnesty?"

"Oh!" said Colonel Fuller evasively, "the thought came into my head, and I let it have full swing for a moment."

"That is what you propose for the rebels in North America—full swing!" laughed Mistress Beverley.

Mistress Lucy Kent clapped her hands and joined in the general laugh.

The next moment she touched a silver call bell on the table and a darky entered obsequiously.

"Some wine, Plato," said she to the servant, and the imp of darkness disappeared.

When the wine arrived, Colonel Fuller filled his glass and looked at his fair companions.

"Why doesn't General Howe move on the enemy?" asked Mistress Kent. "It seems to me that he is losing precious time. Washington is given time to fortify, and if General Howe delays too long the attack will cost him some brave men."

"General Howe knows what he is doing evidently," said the commander of the Loyal Foot. "But as you two young ladies are a little curious, I can say that within the next forty-eight hours we will be beyond the Yankee intrenchments at White Plains. This much I can tell you, at any rate. We have the reins in our hands now, and all we have to do is to guide the chariot of war through the enemy's ranks."

Mistress Beverley did not reply.

"I have heard that Lord Cornwallis is not up with the enemy," said Lucy.

"That is because he is not ready. Just as soon as he has his forces all up, and is ready to strike, he will go in. Colonel Donop, of the Hessians, is now advancing from New Rochelle, and will soon be in line—perhaps by to-night."

"Then the rebels will have to run or surrender."

"That is it," said Colonel Fuller, as he placed his empty glass on the table. "They may fight a little, but not long. We shall strike them on the flank. You know that Washington's army is greatly reduced in numbers. The hospitals are full, and the medical supply is about exhausted. Why, on the other hand, I was told to-day by our chief surgeon that we have a superabundance of such supplies in our hands. We have now nearly seven thousand men——"

"That many, Colonel Fuller?" broke in Mistress Lucy.

"Yes; and, what is more, they are all able-bodied men. On the other hand, many of Washington's men are barefooted, and they scarcely have clothes enough to cover their nakedness."

"I am glad that we have enough medical supplies for our sick soldiers."

"Yes; that is extremely fortunate. In a little room in our medical storehouse is some of the most priceless medicines. What would not Washington give for them?"

"His commission almost," exclaimed Mistress Kent.

"I think so."

"We keep our supplies secure, I trust?"

"Certainly. In the little house on lower Broadway, number ten, are stored those priceless medicines. Why, a pound of them would prove a godsend to the rebel rabble."

"We must take care of the supplies."

"Never fear as to that. But let us drink to the health of the king. Mistress Beverley need not drink from the heart if her sympathies are with Washington. Coming from Boston, as she does, she may be in sympathy with our foes."

"I really have taken but little part in this unhappy struggle," answered Mistress Priscilla Beverley. "Still, as I am a native of North America, it is but natural that I should at times give a few thoughts to the men who have to contend with the king's battalions."

"Nothing in the world more natural," exclaimed Colonel Fuller. "I hold the young ladies of our king's colonies in the highest regard, and I ever respect them. You will not drink to the king, Mistress Beverley?"

"Anything to please a brave soldier," and the handsome speaker filled the delicate glass and lifted it to her lips. "What is the toast, Colonel Fuller?"

"The health of the king and confusion to his enemies!"

The toast was drunk, and the glasses replaced on the table, after which Colonel Fuller rose and made ready to depart.

"I trust we shall soon hear good news from the north," said Mistress Kent. "General Howe should be a little more hasty, I think. However, I am not his adviser. It is only the opinion of a young girl, you know."

"The criticism is, no doubt, just from your standpoint," bowed Colonel Fuller. "Now permit me to bid you good night, ladies. I have business of importance at headquarters."

The handsome officer was followed to the door by both Priscilla and Lucy, who, the moment the portal closed, drew back and looked at one another.

"You played the game to perfection!" cried Priscilla Beverley. "One would have taken you for the most ardent king's woman in the colonies."

"I hope I did not make a mistake. It was the wine that opened Colonel Fuller's mouth. We got a little news out of him. We know where they keep their medical stores and when Cornwallis is to advance, and the strength of the British army operating against Washington. I tried to play Tory, but at times I nearly rebelled against the deception."

"You certainly did admirably," was the reply. "Colonel Fuller did not suspect. He is not himself when in company with wine and women. These seem to be his failure, so report goes. Why, I believe he would have taken us downtown and showed us those priceless medical supplies."

"That would have been asking too much."

"Of course; but we have had a delightful evening with the famous Colonel Socrates Fuller, of the Loyal Foot."

Both girls laughed.

The following moment Plato, the servant, came into the room with excitement in his big eyes.

"What's up, Plato?" cried Lucy Kent. "You haven't seen a ghost, I trust?"

"No, missus; but I found dis yere paper under de rear do'. Hit been slipped under dar lately, an' I thought I——"

"Let us have it!" cried both girls, in a breath. "Slipped under the door, was it?"

"Dat's what it war. Folded jes' like hit's folded now, an'——"

Lucy and Priscilla had opened the note together, and an exclamation rose startlingly from their lips.

"In the city!" cried Mistress Beverley.

"Can it be possible that he has come to New York when it is in the hands of the enemy?"

"What risk!"

Then they put their heads together and read the body of the letter, having up till then merely glanced at the signature.

It ran as follows:

"I am in the city for the cause. If you have anything to communicate, send it to Jonas Toole's place, and do so as soon as possible. Everything depends on promptness and absolute secrecy. The fortunes of liberty are at stake.
FRANK."

After reading this letter the two young ladies again looked into each other's eyes.

"He is here as a spy!" cried Priscilla. "And you know what they did to Captain Hale."

"Yes," and Lucy shuddered. "We have a little news, but sending it to Jonas Toole's place is taking a risk. We will take it ourselves, Priscilla."

"That we will. How opportune Colonel Fuller's visit was. We may not see Captain Lowry personally, but we will let him know that two hearts in New York have not been overawed by the shadow of King George."

"But how to reach him? That is the question. You know that Jonas Toole is more than suspected. His place is watched day and night, and the old man is aware of it. How unfortunate it is that Captain Lowry has chosen this place at which to hear from us."

"But he must have the news we wormed out of Colonel Fuller."

"Aye! and he shall get it!"

"Let us study out a plan," said Mistress Priscilla. "Frank Lowry has risked his neck coming to the city, but no doubt he came at the suggestion of Washington, and since he is here, he will do what we can to render his mission successful."

Half an hour later the two girls were seen to glide from the house by the rear entrance and creep through the garden there.

"Who slipped the letter under the door?" suddenly exclaimed Priscilla.

"Frank in person, perhaps," was the reply. "He may have noticed that we had company and feared to come further."

"Then he did the right thing to beat a retreat. Had he blundered into Colonel Fuller's presence he might have thrown us off our guard and fastened the rope about his own neck. Let us, therefore, play our part of the drama with coolness, for we may need our heads before the curtain is rung down."

And the two fair rebels ceased speak as they slipped off in the darkness of old New York.

CHAPTER IV.

MAKING ACQUAINTANCE.

The few miles that intervened between Washington's camp at White Plains and New York had been successfully passed over by Captain Lowry, and the ardent young patriot found himself in the city.

The danger attached to his mission he did not under-rate, and his first act was to call upon a man known as one of the best friends of liberty in New York.

He was welcomed by this person, who could not give him any news concerning General Howe's plans, and Frank had recourse to other efforts.

After penning the note which he felt would soon fall into Priscilla Beverley's hands, he carried it himself to its destination, and adroitly slipped it under the door, where it was found, as has been seen, by Mistress Kent's servant, Plato.

On his way back to his friend's, Frank almost ran into a young fellow of athletic build, who did not seem to be in the best of humor.

He was standing on a corner waiting for a regiment of British soldiers to pass, and while Frank, out of mere curiosity, stopped near the man he heard him utter language which showed that he had a grievance against General Howe.

"They're nice-looking fellows," he remarked to the young man, as the regiment marched past.

"Food for rebel powder," was the reply. "They'll come back with thinned ranks, I can tell you, for these ragamuffin rebels can shoot to beat creation. I saw how they mowed the king's soldiers down over on Long Island in the summer. Why, it was a picnic for them."

"What regiment is that?"

"It is the Forty-second Foot. They do good work when left to themselves, but they are harassed by a lot of half-drunk officers who get them into all sorts of messes. By the way, be you of the city?"

"No," answered Frank; "I am from the outside."

"I thought so; so am I."

"From the upper country?"

"Yes; from Westchester."

"I am from the other side of the Bronx. I live near New Rochelle."

"What might your name be, fellow?"

"Tom Haverstraw."

"And mine's Jacob Smock."

Frank looked into the speaker's face and smiled to himself.

He had heard of the Smocks, of Westchester, Tories all, and several of them spies for the king.

"Then we might call each other neighbors," remarked Washington's young spy. "You live in Westchester, while nothing but a little stream separates us. When did you come down?"

"Oh, the other night. I am a little disgusted with the king's officers."

"How so? Don't they treat you well? They ought to be good to us, for we sometimes give them a little information."

"That's just what we do!" cried Jacob. "We put our necks into a rebel halter for King George, and yet when it comes to reward we get but little. Confound these stingy officers! They swell around the city in scarlet, make love to the fair damsels, and have a royal time. They give their banquets and big suppers, toast the king and leave the poor privates to be mowed down by rebel artillery."

"It's not just right," observed Frank, to encourage the fellow's flow of rebuke.

"Right?" cried Master Smock. "It's dead wrong! Let me tell you, Master Haverstraw, I had a little experience with this tinsel court the other night. I came down here from above with some important news about Washington and his rabble. I went direct to General Howe's headquarters—he happened to be in the city that night—and found him in council with Cornwallis, Clinton, Percy, and De Heister. I opened my budget and told all I knew, and what do you think they did?"

"Gave you a goodly lot of guineas, as they should."

"They first offered me the thanks of the king, which butter no bread, as you know. When I plainly intimated

that I wanted something more substantial they thought they would open their purses——"

"And empty them at your feet, as they should have done?"

"The miserly redecoats did nothing of the kind. First one gave a gold piece, then another, and that bloated skunk of a De Heister actually robbed himself of two shillings for my benefit."

"And you——"

"I gave the whole lot a piece of my mind. I had a few very plain words for Cornwallis who, when I told them all that I wanted a little gold for a honeymoon, proposed to kiss the bride in addition to the stipend they offered for my services."

"Well?"

"We had some hot words, and the whole thing ended in my picking Lord Cornwallis up and throwing him down in his chair. That did me more good than witnessing the hanging of a rebel. Of course, I got out of the room as soon after that as possible, for if they had detained me, by my life! I believe, hot as I was over the insult, I would have let out some of the earl's blood. I didn't get a shilling for my services, and sometimes I wish that the ragged rebels would make King George dance to the tune of 'Yankee Doodle.' It's aggravating to have your services treated in that manner, I tell you."

"It's not right. Now, I have been down myself with some bits of information for the king's men," volubly answered Captain Frank. "I find them fair pay, but, as I am not about to embark on the matrimonial sea as you mention you are, I did not expect much pay."

"I like your looks, Master Haverstraw," said the British spy. "You look honest and all that, and I think we should become friends. Do you ever indulge in a little wine?"

"I never do. My father was a total abstainer, and we children were raised in his belief."

"Which was right!" exclaimed Jacob Smock. "I take a little too much myself at times, and perhaps I had a little when I threw Lord Cornwallis into the chair. You see, I came down that night with Rufus Mactaw, of whom you may have heard, and we took a little wine at Little's."

"On Bowling Green? I know where it is."

"Well, since you won't take a drink with me we will stroll downtown a bit. It is a lovely night, and I want to see more of you, Master Haverstraw."

Nothing loath to accommodate the young spy, Captain Lowry strolled off with him, and in a few minutes they were reclining on the grass at the Battery.

There Jacob Smock opened up, and told Washington's spy all about his love affair and his forthcoming marriage to Mistress Martin, to all of which Frank listened with a good deal of interest.

He was only waiting for the time to draw his new-found acquaintance out a little.

At last the time arrived.

Master Smock grew communicative as he proceeded.

He told Frank a good deal about the British army, showed him just how the different commands were posted, and how they expected to assault Washington at White Plains as soon as Lord Howe gave the orders.

They had a good time on the grass where it had not been trampled by the feet of soldiers, and Master Smock puffed on his pipe as he dilated on his subject.

He was a thorough spy, and one as cunning as a hare, but wine had evidently loosened his tongue, and Frank was shrewd enough to humor him in many ways, taking occasion to sympathize with him in his grievance against the British officers who had refused to suitably reward him for his services.

"When do you think General Howe will attack the rebels?" asked Frank.

"In a short time. I heard Knyphausen say—he never keeps anything to himself, that Dutchman doesn't—that in less than forty-eight hours the Yankees would be in full retreat from White Plains. That means an assault."

"I don't think it would be very hard to carry their works," remarked Frank, looking into Jacob's face.

"That depends how the rebels fight," was the reply. "Why, I happened to see some of the fighting on Long Island, and the way the Marylanders stood up to the work was a caution."

Frank smiled proudly.

Well did he recall the fighting of the Marylanders on that memorable occasion, for he was in their ranks that day, and could not forget that stubborn resistance nor the way they mowed the British down.

"I am a sort of news gatherer myself," said Captain Lowry. "I pick up a good deal, you know. I sometimes go into the rebel camp and nose round just for the pleasure of picking up scraps of news. Then I retail to General Howe—when he will listen—"

"He is a good listener, but a poor paymaster," snarled Jacob Smock, the spy.

"That is true. Now, there is Earl Percy—"

"Oh, Earl Percy pays a little better than General Howe, but he likes to cling to a sovereign with the rest of them. The king's officers revel in money. Why, they have a treasure chest that would make the eyes of the rebels water for a year. They drink the best of wines and never pay for them so long as they can get the Tories to open their cellars for them. Gold? You've never seen British gold in bulk, Master Haverstraw?"

"Not I."

"Well, I have, and, truth to tell, the guineas looked as big as artillery wheels in my eyes," exclaimed Jacob. "And to think, with all their extravagance, these well-dressed, befopped generals can't afford to pay a poor fellow a little something for information."

"It is a shame."

"I met Cornwallis on the street the other day and he looked at me as black as midnight, for he remembered the cuffing he got at my hands council night. He's not in New York now, neither is Howe."

"Have they gone up country?"

"Yes; they are now with their commands, which means a movement upon the rebels in a short time. I learn that those rebels are getting audacious."

Frank did not reply.

"They organize little parties and sneak out after dark, falling upon some pickets and demolishing them. They are noted for this sort of work."

"I have heard of such predatory acts," responded Captain Lowry. "They seem to be successful."

"Yes; they generally carry back with them some king's men who fall into the Yankee trap. It makes me laugh. I wish they would gobble in my old friend Cornwallis. They will one of these days if the war lasts long enough."

After this prophecy Master Smock yawned and said he must be going.

"Where do you put up?" he asked Frank, as he extended his hand.

"Nowhere in particular. I just circle round when in the city. I think I shall get out to-night."

"I may do the same; but if you care to look me up you might find me at number thirty-one Whitehall Street. I nest there, and Rufus Mactaw sometimes drops in and shares the roost with me."

"I trust you'll fare better next time with the generals," said Frank, as he took the man's hand.

"If I don't I'll quit the king's service, that's what I'll do. I can't keep my neck in the halter for nothing, you know, Master Haverstraw."

Captain Lowry watched Jacob out of sight and turned away himself.

He had picked up a good deal of news already.

His meeting with the Tory spy had been most opportune, and he was hoping that the letter which he had left under Mistress Kent's door for the girls would bring forth fruit.

As he turned away he noticed a man standing in the shadow of a tree, and evidently watching him.

He did not give the man a close look for fear of attracting his attention too much, therefore he walked slowly away.

In a little while he heard footsteps behind him, and glancing over his shoulder discovered with a thrill that he was followed by this same personage.

Frank increased his pace, but did not show signs of fear or discovery.

In a short time he turned into another street and ventured to look back.

His unknown tracker had been joined by a companion, and they were evidently looking after him.

To be tracked in New York under the circumstances sent a nameless thrill to the heart of Washington's young spy, and he, therefore, became closer on his guard.

"I must rid myself of those fellows," thought Captain Frank. "I must get away from them, and as soon as possible. This is a little more than I bargained for. Ah! I have it. Here comes Colonel Fuller's recruiting squad. I'll play recruit for a little while."

He stepped to the edge of the gutter and waited for the squad of men, who were headed by a drum and a banner which called for recruits for the Loyal Foot. It was a ticklish moment in Frank Lowry's life, for to be discovered in New York at that time meant death.

TO BE CONTINUED.

EXECUTED FOR COMPLAINING.

In reading through the interesting chronicles of the last century, there is nothing that will more force itself on the attention than the great number of death sentences which were passed upon criminals for the most trivial offenses.

It seems very hard, for instance, that the death sentence should be passed upon no fewer than fifteen sailors, simply because they complained of the quality of their provisions; yet this was done in 1758.

Seventy men on board a vessel in Portsmouth harbor forced their way into the dock, and from thence set out for London, in order to lay their complaints before the lords of the admiralty. Fifteen of them procured an audience,

but were all ordered to be put in irons and carried back, in order to be tried by a court-martial for mutiny.

They were all sentenced to death, and on the day of their execution the boats from every ship in commission, manned and armed, attended and rowed guard.

The halters were being fixed when they were informed that his majesty had shown mercy to fourteen, but they were to draw lots who should be the man that was to suffer death. The second man drew the unfortunate chance, and, at a given signal, was run up to the yard-arm.

ARTY'S GUARDIAN.

By GEORGE H. COOMER.

"So this is the great dog you have told me of in your letters," I said to my friend, Charles Marston, at whose Colorado home I had just arrived; "what a noble fellow he is!"

It was an immense mastiff which, with a tread like that of a mountain lion, had approached me where I sat and laid his large head confidently across my knees.

"Yes," was the reply; "he is a noble fellow, indeed; noble in character as well as form. Annie and I can bear testimony to that without the least reservation."

"Annie," was my friend's pretty young wife, and her face glowed with feeling as she looked upon the strong, stately creature which appeared so bent upon forming a friendly acquaintance with me.

"He can never be overpraised," she remarked. "We call him 'Arty's Guardian,' for he has twice saved our little boy's life, so that he has well earned the title, we think."

"I should say so," was my answer. "I have had a curiosity to see him ever since learning of his performances."

"He came to us in a singular manner," said her husband. "It was just after a terrible blizzard that we heard a loud scratching at our door. I opened it, and in rushed a huge dog. He commenced pulling at my trousers, all the while looking wistfully up in my face. I was a little shy of him at first, he was so large and powerful; but it was soon plain that he wished me to follow him, and I did so. He appeared very impatient, running ahead, and often looking back with a short bark, as if to encourage me.

"About a mile from the house we came to a spot where a man lay dead in the snow. He was a stranger who had lost his way and been frozen to death in the storm. We discovered afterward that he was from Boston, and had been prospecting through our region. I procured assistance, and had the body removed to our house, where the faithful dog continued to watch beside it until it was laid away forever. Then he attached himself to us in the most affectionate manner, and here he has been ever since.

"'Brutus' was the name on his collar, and to that he answered eagerly. Our little boy was then two years old, and the brute appeared to comprehend the child's helplessness as well as a human being could have done.

"The winter passed away, and as the weather became pleasant Arty would sometimes go toddling about outdoors, though, of course, never very far from the house. One day a couple of horses belonging to a neighbor of ours, while attached to a heavy wagon, took fright and ran. They came in this direction, tearing on at full speed. Arty happened at the moment to be standing right in the

wheel track, and when his mother discovered his danger the team was almost upon him.

"She flew screaming from the door, but saw that she was too late, as the child was ten or twelve rods off. It was an awful moment, but just then Brutus came bounding to the spot. He had barely time to seize the little fellow in his big jaws, and leap with him out of the path, when the cruel hoofs and wheels went thundering by. Could human intelligence or human courage have done more than this?"

"It was a wonderful act," I said, "and I should hold such a four-footed guardian above all price. But the panther incident about which you have written me—I would like to have you point out the spot where that took place. Yonder, I suppose, is the pond, and that old leaning tree by its bank, I should guess, must be the one you described."

The pond was a deep-water sheet of several acres, lying about twenty rods from the house, and the old tree, which I had noticed in particular for its singular position and form, was a great gnarled oak, three or four feet in diameter, leaning from the bank in such a manner that a person could have ascended it with very little difficulty. The trunk was short, and one huge branch extending from its fork, reached out over the pool like a gigantic arm.

"You are right," said my friend; "that is the pond, and that old oak is the very tree. 'Sunny Lake' is the name we give our little basin, because on bright days it so reflects the sunshine. But I tell Annie we ought now to call it 'Panther Lake,' though that would be a rather fierce name, I must confess."

"Yes; much too fierce for my liking," observed Mrs. Marston. "We shall let that old tree stand as a memorial of what has occurred there; and yet at times I almost shudder when I look at it from my window here, it makes me so realize that dreadful scene."

"One of these days it will fall into the water of itself," said her husband; "it seems as if almost ready to do so now. But meanwhile you shall hear the story from Annie's own lips. She can tell it better than I can, for it was an adventure all of which she saw, and part of which she was. Brutus was a part of it, too, and see how he pricks up his ears, as if he knew what we were talking about. I wish he had the power of speech!"

"Poor Brutus!" said Mrs. Marston, "you should have seen him, after that terrible struggle; he was torn in every part of his body, and must have suffered dreadfully.

"We heard that a panther had been seen a mile or two from here, but it did not seem very probable that he would venture near the house, especially in the daytime, and so the rumor did not prevent me from going about the premises as usual, though I knew that a strip of thick woods reached from the main forest, which you can see yonder, to the very margin of the pond. I did not think that a wild beast would be tempted to follow such a narrow line of thicket, with open fields on both sides of it, but the event showed how little I knew of the creature's habits.

"One afternoon my husband had gone away to the village seven miles from here, leaving me alone with Arty and old Brutus. Toward evening I went out to gather some beautiful lilies which grew in the water at the edge of the pond. I had seen them the day before, but some of the buds were not then sufficiently opened.

"I took Arty with me, and put him down near the bank,

where he at once began a chase of the yellow butterflies that were winging their way about him and lighting among the high grass. Brutus we had left in the house enjoying a comfortable nap. I found some difficulty in getting at the lilies, and so a considerable time was occupied in gathering them; but all the while I kept Arty within call, and could hear his baby voice talking now to me and now to the butterflies.

"At length I was startled by a peculiar sound as of some heavy animal rushing with a springy motion over the grass; and this was immediately followed by a cry of terror, and a plaintive call of 'mamma, mamma!'"

"Springing quickly up the bank I saw a sight that even now it frightens me to think of. Before me stood a large, fierce creature, with flaming eyes and waving tail, apparently just ready to leap away with the prize that he had snatched up—and that prize was my own little boy!"

"With outspread arms and a scream that I think could have been heard for more than a mile, I rushed straight toward the savage beast, which seemed startled and confused by such an unexpected act. He bounded a few feet, then stopped for a moment, looking about him with those glaring eyes, and finally sprang directly upon the trunk of the old oak, still holding Arty in his mouth."

"He ran up the leaning body of the tree, and upon reaching its fork went out like a great cat upon the long branch, which, as you can see from here, stretches so far out over the pond."

"It was plain that the fearful enemy could be nothing less than a panther, and even in my terror and confusion I realized that it was only my unlooked-for presence between him and the thicket from which he had come which prevented him from taking to the woods. For an instant the thought of Brutus crossed my mind; but should I run to the house to let him out, would not the savage beast leap down and escape, taking Arty with him?"

"'Mamma, mamma!' called my poor little darling, stretching out his dear baby hands for me to help him. If I hesitated as to my course it was but for an instant. The next moment I was climbing the leaning trunk, using both hands and feet to assist me."

"The panther growled frightfully as I stepped from the fork upon the large limb where he crouched; but I went forward as fast as possible, balancing myself as I did so with all the skill I possessed."

"At first it seemed as if the beast had no thought of retreating, for his whole attitude was one of defiance. His back was rounded, and the hair upon it stood up in a bristling line. But as I advanced his tactics changed. He looked first one way then another, and presently leaped down into the water. Yet his hold of the child was never for a moment relaxed, and with Arty still in his mouth he struck out for the opposite bank."

"I leaped frantically after him, and in fact almost upon him, so that he but just avoided me as he swam. But the water was up to my shoulders, and I knew that it would deepen at every step. The horror of that moment I cannot describe. I floundered on for a few yards, thinking only that I would die with my child. The panther would quickly accomplish the crossing, and then farewell to all hope!"

"'Oh, Arty, Arty!' I cried, in agony, as the water rose

to my neck, and I saw that with another step my footing would be wholly lost."

"Just as the words escaped me there was a heavy, swashing plunge beside the bank, and looking around I saw the head of a great dog pushing out into the pond, while the strong paws were tearing through the water with a prodigious force."

"'Brutus, Brutus!' I exclaimed, 'oh, quick, quick, good dog. Seek him, seek him!'"

"But the noble animal needed no urging."

"He had leaped through a window—the very window you are now sitting at—taking sash and all. And now, with every sweep of those broad paws, he was gaining on his enemy, encumbered as that enemy was with his living prey."

"The two animals landed almost at the same moment on the opposite shore; and dropping his prize on the grass of the bank, the panther bounded fiercely upon his pursuer."

"I flew, rather than ran, around the end of the lake, a distance, as you may see from here, of about forty rods; the yells of the panther and the hoarse growls of Brutus all the while filling the air."

"Arty lay on the ground so close beside them that he was every moment in danger of being trampled upon; and as I caught him to my heart he had strength only to murmur once more that dear, piteous sound, 'Mamma, mamma!'"

"'Oh, mamma has got you, my darling,' I cried, as I fled with him from the spot; 'mamma has got you!'"

"Looking back presently I saw that both combatants had rolled down into the water, where the battle was still continued, now one and now the other seeming to be uppermost."

"Upon reaching the house my joy was great at finding that my little one was, after all, not dangerously injured. The panther's teeth had been fastened mostly in his clothing, though, of course, he had some bites which I knew must be painful. It was so much better than I had feared."

"After dusk Brutus came limping home, covered with blood and wounds. It seemed to me that he had not a piece of whole skin as large as my hand. Yet he crawled up to Arty and licked his pale face and laid his head upon the little baby breast."

"Charles came home in the evening, and early the next morning he fished the body of the dead panther from the pond. Brutus had finished the common enemy, sure enough."

"You know the very largest dog is not supposed to be a match for a panther, and so we have always thought that it was the water which decided the victory in favor of the noble creature that fought so bravely for our child. Brutus is so immensely powerful that he was probably able to force the panther's head under the surface, while the sharp claws of the ferocious beast could not be used there as effectually as on the land."

"Such is our panther story, and I am glad you have come here to make the acquaintance of dear old Brutus, who already knows, just as well as you could tell him, that you are a lover of his kind."

The brave dog looked as if he understood every word that had been said, and going up to Arty he gave him a loving lap with his broad tongue, then once more came and laid his head across my knees."

THE NEWS OF THE WORLD.

Galveston Tangos on Two-and-one-half-mile Floor.

On Texas Independence Day, Broadway, Galveston's new street, was formally opened by the board of city commissioners, which closed the celebration of that event with the world's largest tango party. Broadway, which is 300 feet wide and two and one-half miles long, was used for the dancing floor, the music being supplied by fifteen military bands borrowed from the regimental detachments of the United States army mobilized there.

The street was divided by a 100-foot esplanade, planted with palms and other tropical plants. Double rows of gas and electric lights lined each side of the halves of Broadway, and when these and the residence lights were turned on, a beautiful scene was presented. The new pavement just completed is for light traffic only, perfectly smooth, and the most costly obtainable.

Tango in Yale "Gym."

The tango and the hesitation waltz have scored a surprising victory over gymnastics among the Yale undergraduates, and Doctor William G. Anderson, director of the Yale gymnasium, has substituted dancing classes for the monotonous drills of Swedish gymnastics.

One tango class has already been formed in the gymnasium, and the students may be seen gliding over the polished floor in the "dip," where once they used to perform with dumbbells and Indian clubs. The young men have picked up the dances readily, and already get much more enjoyment out of their gymnasium work than they could with the tiresome arm-and-leg exercise.

Doctor Anderson has always been an advocate of dancing in gymnasium work, but it wasn't until the latest dance craze prevailed that he decided to substitute it for gymnastics in some of his classes.

Several years ago, when Doctor Anderson was physical director of Adelphi Academy, in Brooklyn, N. Y., he studied dancing under the Russian dancing master, Ribeyan, and also mastered the Irish reel under a professional dancer named Hogan and jigs under Eddie Collier, a brother of Willie Collier. Doctor Anderson introduced dancing in his classes at Adelphi Academy, but at the time the innovation was greeted with loud protestations from the directors of the school.

Boy Bandit Killed in Raid.

Alpheus Moore, aged 20, was instantly killed by a bullet which struck him in the eye, and his brother, Wesley, 17 years old, was captured, after the pair had attempted to rob the store of Meyer Rapenport, at Detroit, Mich. The latter was in his store when the robbers entered. They shot at him twice, but his one shot killed the elder youth. The captured boy has confessed to several holdups in Detroit. The boys are sons of a well-to-do resident of Saginaw, Mich.

Here and There.

The average lifetime of the different denominations of United States paper currency differs considerably; that of the \$1 silver certificate, for instance, being but a trifle over one year; the \$5 silver certificate 1.9 years; the \$10 gold

certificate 1.68 years, and the \$20 gold certificate, 3.18 years.

An engineer on a New York railroad has traveled in twenty years a distance equal to about 123 times around the earth at the equator. His run, however, has been principally between New York and Buffalo, so that he has seen a small part of the world, after all.

The honor of having been the first country to use the post card belongs to Austria, where it was introduced in 1869. Its price was less than a halfpenny, and at first its users were allowed to write only twenty-five words upon it. The card appeared in England exactly one year later.

California has 130 mountains. Twelve are more than 14,000 feet high.

In the United States cities there was last year one bank to every 9,700 people, and in Canadian cities one to every 3,100 persons. In the entire United States there are 27,000 banks, or a bank to every 3,407 persons.

Among certain tribes on the West African coast, any stranger who dies in a town is buried on the road by which he entered it, so that his spirit may easily find the way back to his home, or at least watch the road thither and listen for the coming of friends.

The scarcity of wood for general purposes, and the increasing cost of wooden railway ties in Europe, has encouraged the manufacture and general use of metal ties in recent years in the railways on the Continent. About 70 per cent of the ties in use on the federal railways of Switzerland are metal.

Illinois Woman Dies at 105.

Mrs. Ellen Jenkinson, 105 years old, for many years the oldest resident in Waukegan, Ill., is dead. She lived to see five generations of her family. She had seven children, forty-four grandchildren, fifty great-grandchildren, and four great-great-grandchildren.

Though 42, is Popular Pupil.

Although he is 42 years old, and the father of a 17-year-old girl, who is in the Columbia, Mo., high school, Barney R. Williams, a senior in the school of law at the University of Missouri, is one of the most popular students in the college. He recently passed the State bar examination with good grades. Williams claims he has disproved the theory that men do not learn unfamiliar subjects readily after the age of 35 years.

Swamping Detroit.

It begins to look as if some means must be found in Detroit to check the influx of labor into the city. The signs accumulate that more is here already than the market is likely to absorb, and it is plainly continuing to come. Reports from the police department indicate that a large number have arrived in town lately who are without means of supporting themselves. They crowd the stations, asking for sleeping quarters, and steps are being taken to provide a municipal lodging house such as other cities have been obliged to open in the last few months.

The State Employment Bureau every day shows new faces in the ranks applying for work; private employment

agencies confirm the impression received that there is not only an oversupply of labor, but that the supply is steadily enlarging.

Blind Man Travels Without Company.

Professor W. C. Hutchinson, although blind, is supporting a wife and child by his labors in behalf of the Kansas State Institute for the Blind at Kansas City, Kan., of which he is the traveling field agent. He goes about the State alone, buys his own railroad tickets, gets on and off trains, finds his way to hotels, keeps up his correspondence, and visits prospective students virtually without help.

His ability to do things appears all the more remarkable when it is known that he has been blind but five years, and has learned to accommodate himself to the change in his life. In 1909, while he was principal of the high school here, he lost his sight when sodium with which he was experimenting exploded.

Later he went to the school for blind at Kansas City, and mastered the course there in a short time. He declares the worst part of being blind is the mental strain of having to be on the alert at all times.

With the Scientists.

Electricity is now extensively used to harvest ice from rivers and ponds. The electric motors drive the ice-harvesting machinery, trim the cakes, and elevate them to the ice houses.

The microscope is in daily use in the examination of metals and alloys in more than 200 laboratories in the United States.

In dry air, sound travels 1,442 feet a second; in water, 4,900 feet; in iron, 17,500 feet.

The expression "an inch of rain" refers to the marks upon a standard rain gauge, the amount of rain equivalent to the distance between two such marks being represented by nearly 101 tons over an acre of land.

Quails and partridges deserted parts of France when the aeroplane made its first appearance there.

A leather belt in an English factory has been running at a speed of 1,800 feet a minute from nine to twelve hours a day for more than thirty-two years.

Scientists have found fifty-six acres in the ocean where the water is more than three miles deep, ten where it exceeds four miles, and four where the bottom is more than five miles down.

To keep milk sweet, put a teaspoonful of horseradish in a pan of milk. This will keep it sweet several hours longer than without it.

Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Illinois, and Ohio produce more than 40 per cent in value of the minerals found in the United States.

The United States patent office has reported a partial list of nearly 500 patents to negroes, among them twenty-seven to Granville T. Woods, of New York, for electrical devices. Many of these are in use throughout the country, one of particular value having been adopted by the telephone trust.

If Gold Were Dross.

The interesting problem was raised by one of the French reviews recently, what would happen if gold were produced in such enormous quantities as to sink in value to the level of the baser metals. The three contingencies discussed were the extraction of gold from sea water, which

was dismissed as too expensive to be attainable; the increase from existing mines, which would be negligible from the sensational standpoint of the argument; and the probability of the production of gold by chemical means.

It was the third means of production which was treated as seriously as the nature of the subject permitted, and it was declared that in relying upon the recent progress of experimental physics and of chemical synthesis the possibility of the transmutation of the metals could no longer be considered a simple chimera, and might become a reality of to-morrow or the day after to-morrow.

All these experiments, however, rest ultimately upon gold. If gold became dross it would be necessary either to find a substitute metal possessing similar qualities, or to reorganize the existing monetary systems of the commercial nations. The latter is not beyond the reach of sane discussion and of definite proposals. Its essential defect would lie in the absence of power to enforce international agreements, in case financial weakness offered strong inducements for their violation.

The romantic dream of the sudden dethronement of gold from its place as the standard metal would be controlled, to begin with, by the cost of the processes of production of artificial gold. The mere discovery that gold could be produced by chemical processes would not solve the problem. Unless it could be produced in large quantities at a cost materially below the cost of quartz mining in South Africa, the new process would remain only an interesting toy.

Challenges Any Vegetarian.

T. L. Johnson, of Mooreburg, Tenn., who is 56 years old, does not think much of a vegetarian diet as a builder of athletes, and is willing to meet any vegetarian in most any sort of a contest. He has been a hearty meat eater all his life, and believes it is a most healthful food. He offers to outwalk or outrun any vegetarian of his age for any distance.

Jobless on Long Hike.

An "army" of the unemployed broke camp on a vacant lot in San Francisco recently, and started on a march to Washington, D. C.

There are twenty-four companies of ninety men each, and the men have all of the officers of a military regiment—except a paymaster. They were led by buglers and drummers. "General" C. T. Kelly is the commanding officer.

Saved Thirty Lives, Yet is Refused Lodging.

Chicago has no place for heroes, in the opinion of Rufus, the dog life-saver of Death Valley. Rufus has saved thirty lives in the Great American Desert. He came to Chicago recently with his master, Lou Wescott Beck, scout and pathfinder, who is to deliver a lecture there before the Chicago Engineers' Club.

All day Beck tramped the streets, vainly seeking lodging for himself that would include shelter for Rufus, a Siberian bloodhound. Hotels and boarding houses turned Rufus down; street-car men barred him, and policemen sought to abduct him to the pound. Finally he located D. W. Pollard, executive secretary of the Boy Scouts of America, and, with Rufus, was made welcome at the Pollard home.

Rufus once fought off a flock of buzzards which were

attacking a dying man, the birds having already pecked off one ear. He treed three mountain lions and fought them to a finish; and remained chained to the leg of a dying prospector on the sands for thirty hours, while his master was in search of needed medicines and a litter.

Horseshoes Bring Luck Here.

Signs, signals, and flagmen have failed to lessen the death toll taken by railroads at grade crossings, but a new safety device has been discovered. It is a string of old horseshoes.

Somebody hung the horseshoes at one of the most dangerous crossing in Waycross, Ga., and ever since they were put there, luck has been on the side of the railroad's victims. One Pierce County farmer was thrown under a train, but managed to escape with a gash in one ear. Buggies and automobiles caught on the crossing by trains have apparently jumped out of the way on a second's notice.

New Musical Instrument.

The newest musical instrument is an appliance for the imitations of any form of noise, specially designed for theatrical purposes. In appearance it resembles a piano, it is electrically operated, and by means of a system of "noise-makers" which can be combined in any desired manner, it can produce any imaginable sound, such as wind, rain, thunder, the fall of dead leaves, the sough of the sea, the noise caused by a railway train, hoofbeats, breakages, et cetera, apart from such simple things as bell ringing.

Dogs Win Derby on Snow.

Fred Ayer finished first in the Solomon Derby dog race that was run from Nome over the snow trail to Solomon and return, recently. His time for the sixty-four miles was 6 hours 30 minutes 4 seconds. John Johnson, winner of last year's derby was a close second, with his team of Siberian wolves, and finished two minutes after Ayer.

The five teams started under clear skies from Nome at 10 a. m., but a wind and snow storm that reached the proportions of a blizzard developed, and destroyed chances of lowering time records. Johnson's time last year, which fixed the record for the course, was 5 hours 47 minutes 24 seconds.

The All-Alaska sweepstakes will be run later.

Longest Submarine Telephone.

Across the Gulf of Georgia, a distance of about fifty miles, there has been laid a telephone cable. It is believed that this is the longest submarine telephone in the world. In several places the conductor lies at a depth of more than 200 fathoms, and at one point is 1,536 feet below the surface of the water. This cable connects Vancouver on the mainland with Victoria, the capital of British Columbia, and several lesser towns on Vancouver Island.

Race Program for Exposition.

A feature sporting event of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition will be the great harness races on one of the finest tracks ever constructed in the world. Experts are now preparing this course, and declare that when completed, it will be the fastest and safest ever used for racing.

There will be two great meets, in summer and fall, and

the exposition is offering guaranteed stakes of \$227,000 for the twenty-four days' racing. This enormous sum has never been equaled before in the history of racing, and the same is true of the guaranteed stakes of \$20,000 each offered for pacing horses. While that amount has been offered before for trotting horses, and will be guaranteed in this class as well by the exposition, the instances have been so few as to make them of historical note in racing records.

All classes and ages of horses will have opportunity of competing, and the terms of entrance are very liberal, all entries being guaranteed a start.

In the races for the \$20,000 stakes, entries made prior to April 1, 1914, \$400 will be charged for start; prior to January 2, 1915, \$600, and prior to June 1, 1915, \$1,000.

Horses must be named with entry. Nominators may substitute horses, however, before June 1, 1915, upon payment of an additional sum. Horses must be eligible on January 1, 1915, to stakes in which they are entered. Horses entered early, and getting a faster record before January 1, 1915, may be transferred to the stakes in which they are eligible, or the nominator may name another horse in place of the one originally entered.

Stakes will be divided \$5,000 to the first heat, \$5,000 to the second, \$5,000 to the third heat, and \$5,000 to rank in summary. Moneys will be divided 50, 25, 15, and 10 per cent.

All races will be mile heats, three in five. No race will be longer than five heats, and moneys in races not divided before the fifth heat will be divided according to rank in summary at the termination of the fifth heat. Five per cent of the amount raced for in each division will be deducted from each money won. All stakes are guaranteed for the amount offered. The races will be run under the rules of the National Trotting Association.

The summer meet's principal events include: 2:10 class trotting, \$20,000; 2:00 class pacing, \$20,000; two-year-olds, trotting, \$2,000; three-year-olds, trotting, \$5,000; three-year-olds, pacing, \$3,000; two-year-olds, pacing, \$2,000.

In addition to the \$227,000 offered in money for the two meets of twenty-four days' racing, rich prizes in trophies of plate will be awarded.

Hoppe Sets a New World's Mark.

Willie Hoppe defeated George Sutton recently in the second block of 500 points in the 1,500-point championship 18.2 balkline billiard match, 541 to 74. Hoppe ran out in four innings, an average run of 135¼, a new world's record.

The old mark, an average of 100, was held jointly by Sutton and Hoppe. The former ran out in five innings in a tournament game in 1906, while Hoppe equaled the mark at Los Angeles in 1910.

Alcohol Menace to Race—Doctor Eliot.

Charles W. Eliot, president emeritus of Harvard, is out with a statement that the increase of insane and criminal persons is largely due to the use of alcohol. He contends that for the last ten years his studies have led him to look more carefully into temperance than ever before.

"These studies related," he says, "to the terrible effects of alcoholism in increasing the number of the feeble-minded, insane, and criminal in our American communities. Somewhat more than a year ago I had a long opportunity of observing the difference between the white race and

the Japanese, the Chinese, the Indian, the Malay, and some of the Mohammedan people in regard to susceptibility to the alcoholic temptation. The white race is inferior to all the other people I have named in regard to this susceptibility to the temptation of alcoholism.

"No observant person can travel through the East for a year without being shocked by the manifest tendency of the white race temporarily resident there to destroy itself through alcoholism. The lesson of the East is that the alcoholism of the white race must be overcome or that vice will overcome the race."

New Tuberculosis Cure?

Privy Councilor Spiess, of Frankfort, Germany, who once operated on the throat of the kaiser, has announced that he has completed a long series of successful experiments in the treatment of tuberculosis of the throat by means of gold cyanide injected into the veins.

The experiments have hitherto been made only on animals, and Doctor Spiess emphasized the necessity of continuing them with human beings before arriving at the conclusion that a positive cure had been found.

Four Children Equal One Foot.

"I want to say that I consider a man with eight children to support far more of a cripple than a man who has lost both feet, but has no one dependent upon him."

This statement was made recently by Alderman Isidor M. Rosenblum, of Brownsville, New York, in a discussion in the board of aldermen over giving cripples a preference in the distribution of licenses for news and fruit stands.

The alderman went on to argue that a man who had a large family to support, and had built up a good business as a newsdealer, ought not to be discriminated against in favor of some man or woman who might be crippled, but was not the breadwinner of a family.

Seek Slayer in an Eye.

Yielding to persons who have faith in the old superstition, the authorities at Aurora, Ill., have photographed the eye of Theresa Hollander. State Attorney Tyer admitted this, saying that it was the belief of many that the retina of a murdered person retained the image of the murderer.

Miss Hollander was beaten to death in a cemetery. The picture was taken after a suggestion of an oculist, who asserted with emphasis that the retina of the slain girl's eye would show the last object before her conscious vision.

The photograph was made the day after the murder as the body was being cared for at a local undertaker's. The authorities rather feared they would be ridiculed for this effort, but were anxious to leave nothing undone to get evidence, so went through the performance, holding every actor in the scene to the most profound secrecy.

Never Saw Her Fiance.

Miss Hazel Hulse, a young Trenton, N. J., girl, has started on a journey halfway around the world to marry Arthur G. Bowman, a man whom she has never seen. Despite the fact that the two have never seen each other, both say there is nothing unusual in the case, as they feel that they have known each other for years, and in a way they have.

Miss Hulse's brother, Aubrey Hulse, and her uncle, Clarence Lovett, work with Mr. Bowman as United States

custom officials in China. Miss Hulse, several years ago, sent her picture to her brother, who showed it to his friend Bowman. Then Hulse sent Bowman's picture to his sister.

That was the beginning. They say the rest came along naturally. Letters went between the two, and two months ago one of Bowman's letters contained an offer of marriage. It was accepted.

Miss Hulse was accompanied to the Far East by her brother, who was in Trenton. He will return to his customs work in China. At Tokyo they will be met by Mr. Bowman and Mr. Lovett. The marriage ceremony will be performed there, and the bridal party will proceed to Hangchow, China, where the newlyweds will make their home.

Guard Stops President.

President Wilson took a long, brisk walk through the streets of the capital recently. Few people recognized him as he swung along rapidly through the crowds on the principal thoroughfares.

On his route back to the White House, the president determined to take a short cut through the long corridor of the interior department. At the entrance he was confronted with a sign, "No visitors admitted after 2 p. m." When the president opened the door, an aged doorkeeper stepped forward and, carefully eying the intruder, finally asked:

"Well, what do you want?"

"I'm Woodrow Wilson," answered the president, with a smile.

"Well, well," said the doorkeeper nervously. "I thought your face looked familiar."

Swallowed Radium Tube.

A woman in the General Hospital, Vienna, recently swallowed a tube containing radium worth £650 (\$3,250), with which she was being treated for cancer of the throat.

It was at first thought that the tube had been lost, but an examination proved she had swallowed it. Owing to the great danger to her from the radium, an operation was immediately performed, and the radium was recovered. The woman stood the operation well.

Ball Player Wins His Case.

The National Baseball Commission recently decided that the claim of Player W. V. Hoironimus, formerly of the Chicago National League Club, that he be paid \$200 per month by the Terre Haute club, to which he was sold, or be declared a free agent, was just and right. The player contended that he signed with the Chicago club for \$200 a month for the season of 1913, and that this salary should be maintained by the Terre Haute club. When the attention of rule 17 of the commission was called to the attention of the Terre Haute club, the club agreed to the player's terms.

\$15,000,000 Fleet of Airships Asked.

An appropriation of \$15,000,000 for the purchase of aeroplanes and the establishment of aeronautical schools by the army and navy, is provided in a bill introduced by Representative l'Engle, of Florida, recently. Mr. l'Engle asserts that the United States is behind all other nations in the development of the aeroplane as an instrument of

warfare, and that it now has only "twelve obsolete, man-killing aeroplanes, and nary a dirigible."

It is foolhardy, Mr. l'Engle contends, for the United States to build a Panama Canal, to construct a railroad just south of the north pole, to spend millions for its army and navy, to improve rivers and harbors, and otherwise progress as a nation, while lagging behind in the use of the fighting aircraft.

Hurricane Sweeps Islands.

The worst hurricane experienced in fifty years has devastated Cook Island and Aitutaki Island, in the archipelago south of the Society Islands.

In the course of the storm a huge wave swept over Mauko Island, in the same group, destroying an entire village. The condition of the inhabitants of the storm-stricken islands is pitiable.

New Sport in South.

The growth of newcomb, a game originally introduced in the South about twenty years ago, has now attained such proportions throughout the country that a handbook on the sport has been issued. Many schools and colleges have taken it up, as is evidenced by the numerous photographs in the publication. In speaking of the game, James E. Sullivan said that it is now being played in nearly every State in the Union, though it has attained its greatest popularity in the South, where it was first introduced.

The game is called newcomb because of the fact that its founders introduced it at Newcomb College, Tulane University, New Orleans. It was in 1893 that the sport was first attempted, and its object at the time was described as "affording a game that could be easily arranged, played with any number of students, and played equally well either outdoors or indoors." Normal schools and girls' colleges have eagerly taken up the sport, but it is not confined to women. Men and boys find it equally interesting and productive of exercise.

A clear space is all that is needed to lay out the "field" for newcomb. Gymnasium, schoolyard, or athletic field may be used with the same results. The dimensions vary according to the age and strength of the players, and may be arranged for each particular game, or made permanent. A basket-ball court indoors affords sufficient room for the game. The ball is of the same size and material as the official basket ball.

Two courts of equal size, marked by chalk lines on the four sides, with a "neutral zone" between the two sections, make the field. At each end of the neutral zone a post is erected, and from these posts a rope is stretched across the zone, dividing the field and zone into two equal parts. The object of the game is to throw the ball over this rope and make it strike any clear space in the opponents' court. At the beginning of each game, the captains jump for the ball, as the centers jump in basket ball, but the effort is made to catch it or bat it into one's own court. Then the captains resume their places in the center of their respective courts near the neutral zone, and the one who has won the toss has the first throw. The players, an equal number on each side, should be distributed so as to protect all the home territory.

A touchdown is scored whenever the ball touches a clear space in the enemy's court. This counts one point. A touchdown is also scored by the team sending the ball when one of the opponents bats it into the neutral zone.

Fouls may be made by hitting the rope, throwing under the rope, throwing the ball so it strikes in the neutral zone, unnecessary delay in throwing the ball after receiving it, or throwing the ball while either foot is outside the boundary line. At the conclusion of each half the fouls are added up, an equal number, amounting to the low team score in fouls, is canceled from each team's slate, and all the excess fouls are added to the score of the opponents. A dropped ball scores one point for the opposing team.

There are numerous other rules regarding fouls for outside throwing, but those mentioned form the main part of the game. The ball must be thrown always with one hand, but exceptions are allowed in the case of quick passing, when two hands may be used. The teams change sides at the beginning of each half, the time for these periods being optional with the captains of the respective sides.

Professor Clara Gregory Baer, director of physical education at Newcomb College, which is part of the Tulane University of Louisiana, at New Orleans, is the leading figure in the sport. She is author of the booklet on the sport which has recently been published, and she has invited all inquiries and suggestions that may pertain to the game. In an article entitled "General Tactics," Professor Baer offers the following about the game:

"The object of the game is to secure a touchdown. Therefore, when on the receiving side, guard the ground on which you stand. Catch the ball, as that will prevent the opposing team from scoring a touchdown. Learn to throw curve balls that will just clear the rope, and be difficult to catch. Remember that 'out' balls are fouls, and they score for the opponents. When on the receiving side, do not try to stop an out ball, but let it go. Make a careful distribution of players, and do not put the best players on the same side of the court. Look for the enemy's weakest defense, and throw the ball in that direction.

"While the players do not have to stand in any given position, it is well to prevent general running over the field, as that confuses the players and obstructs the play. A limited radius should be understood for each player, and to secure the best team work the player who receives the ball should throw it. Never look in the direction you intend throwing the ball. Remember that it is skillful rather than violent playing that wins games. Vary your plays and do not always aim in the same direction. Avoid unnecessarily high balls. Try to help your team by giving it your best effort, but do not get in the way of others, and, above all, do not try to do all the playing yourself. Again, remember that in order to win the whole team must work."

Her Kidnaping Instinct Cured.

A remarkable mental growth was accomplished by Stella Rubin, twenty-two years old, who a year ago was pronounced mentally a child of eight, and was discharged recently from the hospital for the feeble-minded on Randall's Island, New York, a child of thirteen mentally.

In June, 1912, Stella kidnaped five-year-old Sophie Weisberg by promising to take her to a moving-picture show. The young woman was tried before Judge O'Sullivan in general sessions on a charge of kidnaping. On the report of physicians, she was committed to the State Asylum for the Insane at Central Islip.

The doctors there reported that she was sane, and

ordered that she be returned. Philanthropic women became interested and called in Doctor M. G. Schlapp and Doctor Frederick W. Ellis to examine her.

They reported to the court that while she was physically a well-developed woman, she was mentally a child of eight or ten. Basing their conclusions on the Binet-Simon tests, they said the kidnaping was the result of maternal instinct, which made her regard the Weisberg child as the ordinary girl of eight regards her doll.

They recommended that she be sent to the Randall's Island Hospital, where she was to have treatment by Doctor Schlapp.

Judge Wadhams ordered her discharge from that institution after he received reports from Doctor Schlapp and from W. D. Bosler, the girl's attorney, that she is able to take care of herself without getting into trouble.

In asking for her discharge, Mr. Bosler told the court that while his client was a child a year ago, her education to-day equaled that of most young women of her station in life. He expressed confidence in her ability to go out and earn a living.

The substance of the report made by Doctor Schlapp was that the girl had so far advanced that she was no longer a menace to society.

Reptiles of Fire Terrify Sailors.

The story of an unusual electric storm encountered in the South Seas, when for an hour the sky seemed ablaze with thousands of streaks of fire that resembled snakes, is brought to San Francisco, Cal., by Captain McDonald, of the schooner *William Olson*. The ship's company also witnessed the phenomenon.

Describing the sight, Captain McDonald said:

"It was a strange sight. Suddenly the breeze died out and the wind dropped to a dead calm; the sky became black as the ship's hold and the atmosphere was so hot that we could hardly breathe. Then as we stood in the waist of the ship, wondering what was going to happen next, the sky flared as if with a million searchlights.

"The heavens seemed to yawn and there was a lot of fiery creatures resembling snakes moving about in the sky. They darted and circled and shot out in all directions, making crazy courses all over the sea.

"Some of the new men dropped on their knees in fear, but the old-timers were not alarmed, knowing it was an electrical storm."

New Army-Navy Site.

The business men, of Philadelphia, are still striving to have the Army-Navy football game played in Philadelphia next November, and have suggested to the naval authorities that if Franklin Field or the American or National League baseball park is not large enough to accommodate the crowds, they are willing to go to the expense of building a wooden stadium at League Island. This is government property, and there is ample room there for the construction of suitable stands.

E. J. Berlet, of Philadelphia, chairman of the committee, visited Annapolis recently, and talked over the plans with Captain Fullam, superintendent of the Naval Academy. Mr. Berlet says that Captain Fullam takes the stand that the West Point cadets should return the courtesy extended by the midshipmen last year, when the latter consented to come to New York.

If there is a deadlock between the authorities over the

selection of a place for the game, the matter will be decided by the secretary of war and the secretary of the navy.

Because of the splendid manner in which the game was arranged and managed at the Polo Grounds last year, there is a very strong sentiment on the part of many officials of both services to play the game there again.

Horse Saves Man from Bull.

An infuriated bull which he was leading from his stable was trampling Russell Nehls, a young farmer, of Newark, Ohio, and he was in danger of death when his pet driving horse broke loose from its stall and kicked the bull to death.

Mining in Alaska.

The conclusions reached as a result of six years' exploration in the Yukon-Tanana region, Alaska, by L. M. Prindle, have been published by the United States geological survey in Bulletin No. 525. At first glance the reader might be led to believe that the results are not commensurate with the time spent in the survey, but it should be understood that the area explored is nearly 3,000 square miles, and that the number of days spent on the work was less than 250. Considerable time was spent in investigating the region adjacent to Fairbanks, as the extensive mining operations in that vicinity yield much information concerning the distribution of the alluvial gold.

It has been found that the placer-gold reserves of the Fairbanks district, even if only those deposits that can be mined by methods now in use are considered, are still very large. There are, however, still larger deposits of auriferous gravels whose content of gold is so small that they can be profitably handled only by improved methods of mining. These facts and the existence within the district of extensive alluvial deposits, which have not been thoroughly prospected, make the outlook for placer mining in the region exceedingly hopeful. It is therefore by no means certain that the placer-mining industry will continue to decline as it has declined in the last two years. A large expansion of the industry in this field can be brought about only by lessening the operating costs through improved means of communication.

Great Wind Blows Water Out of Potomac.

A gale recently played funny pranks in the nation's capital. It blew all the water out of the eastern branch of the Potomac River, thus shutting down the big power plant that supplies electric current for one of the street-car systems and forcing it to go out of commission. Thirty-five thousand people had to walk, and some of the biggest department stores were without illumination. Then it shook the earth so that an "earthquake" record was written by the seismograph of Georgetown University.

For several hours the earth's surface quivered continuously. The lines of the seismograph record show almost continuous wavers.

VENTRILOQUISM

Taught Any Man or Boy

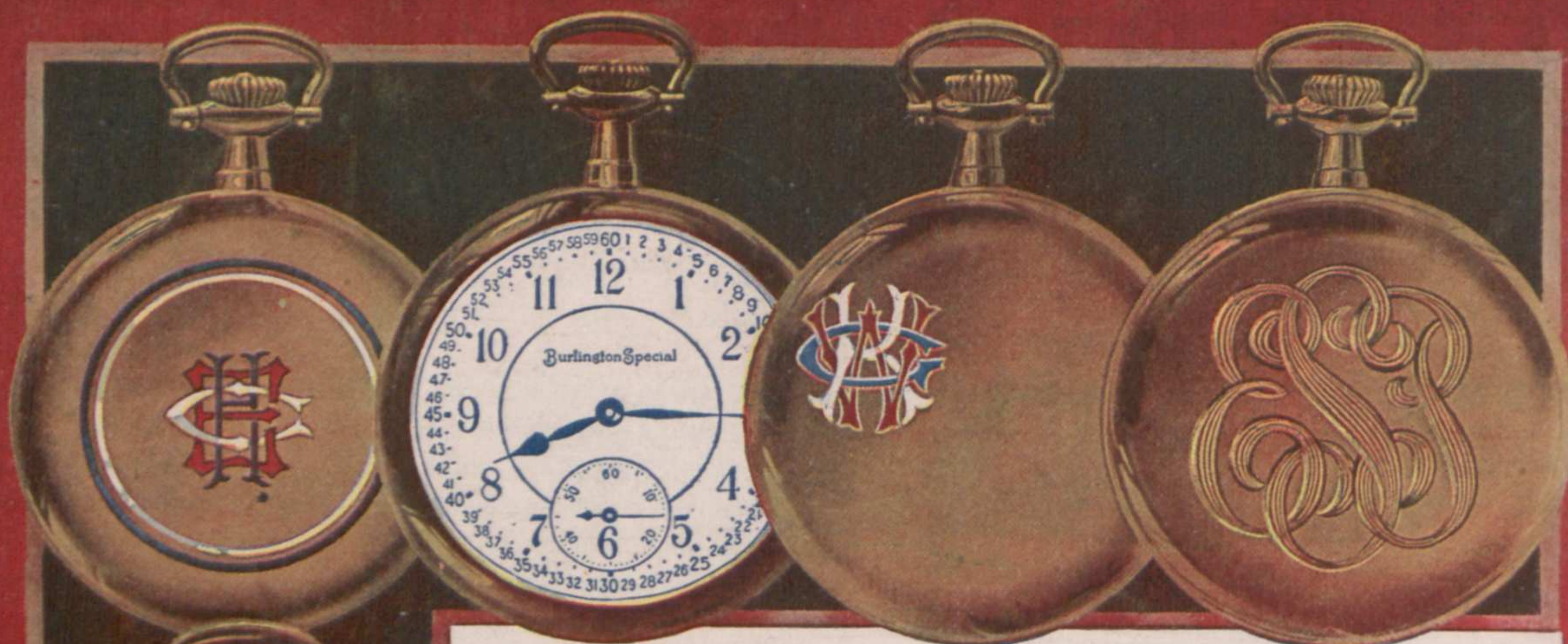
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